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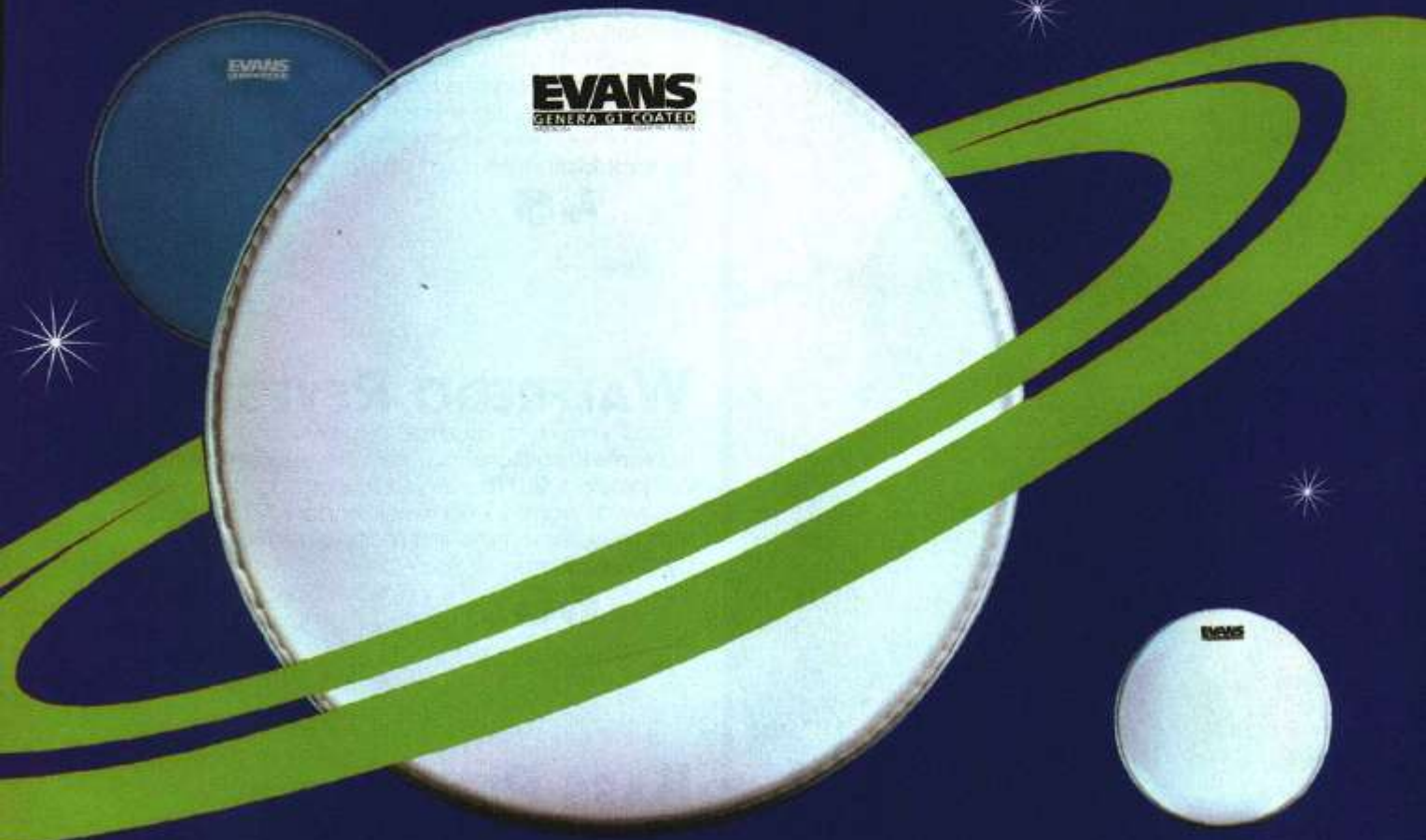

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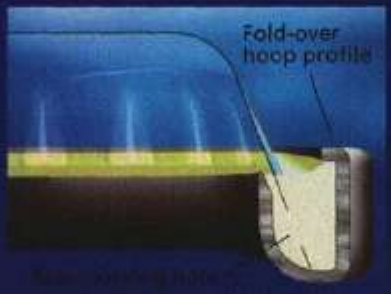

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contents

photo by Alex Solca

DAVE WECKL

Sometimes it seems Dave Weckl's name is muttered in derision as often as it is summoned in reverence. This is simply proof of the enormous effect his precise and complex playing has had on the drumming landscape. It's also the reason Dave decided to explore a completely new way of playing the drums.

by Rick Mattingly

48

WALFREDO REYES SR.

Today's modern drumset player almost inevitably explores incorporating Latin percussion ideas into his or her playing. But it wasn't too long ago when such an idea was considered revolutionary. Walfredo Reyes Sr. was there when the first shots were fired.

by Robyn Flans

66

BASS PLAYERS ON DRUMMERS

It's been said a hundred times in these very pages: Hook up with the bass player, and life will be so fine. Okay, but what exactly does "hooking up" mean? Glad you asked, because this month *MD* invited some of the world's top bass players—Levin, Lee, Patitucci, Bronze, Caron, Hinton, and Coutts—to share their (understandably strong) opinions on the matter.

by T. Bruce Wittet

82

Volume 22, Number 4

Cover photo by Alex Solca

education

98 CONCEPTS
Maximizing Your Practice Time
by Zoro

104 ARTIST ON TRACK
Joe Chambers
by Mark Griffith

114 STRICTLY TECHNIQUE
Study In Rhythms, Part 2
by Joe Morello

116 ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC
Good Things Come In 3s
by Rod Morgenstein

118 ROCK PERSPECTIVES
Rolling Funk
by Rusty Parker

130 DRUMS ONLINE
Power To The People
by Matt Peiken

131 Speak Out: Best Drum Clinics

132 TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
Quitting Your Day Job
by Greg Thomas

profiles

18 UP & COMING
Greg Eklund Of Everclear
by Matt Peiken

120 PORTRAITS
Michael Giles: Crimson Original
by Ken Micallef

140 ON THE MOVE

80
MD GIVEAWAY
Win A $14,000 Prize Package
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Zildjian Cymbals, Gibraltar Hardware,
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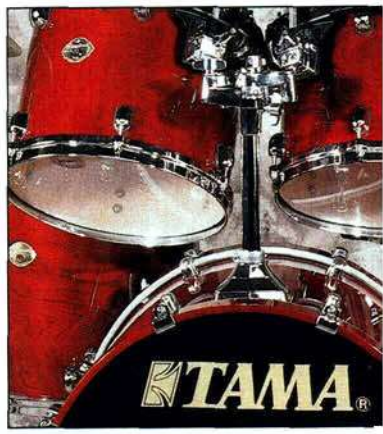
equipment



34 NEW AND NOTABLE

38 PRODUCT CLOSE-UP
Tama Starclassic Performer Drumkit
by Rick Van Horn

41 Bosphorus Cymbals
by William F. Miller

44 Noble & Cooley Alloy Classic Snare Drum
by Rick Mattingly

110 SHOP TALK
Getting The Best Sound From "Less Than The Best" Drums
by Larry t. Kennedy

news

14 UPDATE
Murumba's Michael Faue, Kevin Winard, and Kalani,
Sonny Emory, Abe Juckes of Treehouse, Marillion's Ian Mosley,
and Bobby Borg of Warrant, plus News

142 INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS
PASIC '97 In Review

departments

6 EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

8 READERS' PLATFORM

30 ASK A PRO
Phil Collins and Danny Carey

32 IT'S QUESTIONABLE

126 CRITIQUE
Jack DeJohnette CD and book, Wertico & Bendian, Tony Williams
Lifetime, and Bozzio Levin Stevens albums, Mozambique video,
and more

146 DRUM MARKET
Including Vintage Showcase

150 DRUMKIT OF THE MONTH

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Staying Open

"As far as I'm concerned, so-and-so is *the* guy; he's the only drummer happening today." "Don't bother with that book—all you need is *Stick Control."* A couple of rather closed-minded comments, wouldn't you say? I was certainly surprised to hear them.

Last week, while at a local drumshop, I witnessed two drummers loudly making these statements, almost as if to inform everyone in the room of their opinions. Then, to make matters worse, a few minutes later I heard another customer tell one of the employees, "That's the only stick I'll ever use; the other brands suck."

Yes, it is important to have strong feelings about the direction you want to take your playing, the equipment you use, and the artists who inspire you. However, the attitude expressed by these drummers is, without a doubt, keeping them from a lot of valuable information.

Having an open mind about equipment seems obvious. The overall quality of today's products—from sticks and heads to cymbals and drums—is incredibly high. You may prefer one brand over another because of certain features, but no company's products "suck." In fact, if you're not investigating and experimenting with as many of the choices available today as possible, you may well be missing out on a musical tool that could really help you.

As far as books are concerned, the "classics" are considered classic for good reason—George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control* and Ted Reed's *Progressive Steps To Syncopation For The Modern Drummer,* among others, continue to challenge and motivate students. But that doesn't mean there aren't potentially beneficial works being written today. Keeping abreast of new titles just might offer you some insight into areas of drumming you've never thought of before.

The most worrisome comment to me was the one about the drummer's one-and-only favorite artist. All of us have our list of players we like, drummers who have made us want to get behind a set of drums and *play.* Unfortunately, it appears that for some people this list is far too short. You can find terrific drummers performing in every style of music. It's a bit of a cliche, but it's true: You can learn something from any drummer. However, the only way you're going to do that is if you listen to—and stay open to—as many different artists as possible.

I think it's imperative for all of us to be open-minded regarding new concepts, products, educational materials, and *especially* artists. As drummers, it's an attitude we definitely should foster and one that can only help us improve at our craft. The question is, are you "staying open" to drumming?

Ron Spagnardi

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RE: THE TOMMY LEE AD

Editor's note: Never in MD's history has an ad generated as much controversy as did the Paiste/Tommy Lee ad that appeared in the October '97 issue. And that controversy continues, with a barrage of reader comments about the letters that appeared in the January '98 Readers' Platform *in* response *to the ad.*

In criticizing those of us who thought Paiste was out of line with their Tommy Lee ad, Mike Summers groups a conglomeration of society's ills into a sentence and suggests that we worry about those problems instead, stating: "Any child could watch *The Simpsons* or *Beavis And Butt-Head* and hear the same words." Besides using immature "two wrongs make a right" logic, his argument is plain wrong. *Beavis And Butt-Head* has been justifiably criticized for its lack of class, but it features cartoon characters and shouldn't be confused with the reality of Tommy Lee lying in a pile of excrement. And the implication that *The Simpsons* uses objectionable language couldn't be further from the truth. This long-running, critically acclaimed television series has never used the word "s**t" or given its viewers the finger.

Kevin Ridolfi
via Internet

I, too, found the Paiste/Tommy Lee ad lacking taste or humor. But I'm thirty-six years old and didn't think I was the "target" audience—as evidenced by the readers who wrote in to say they liked it.

However, I did take exception with the response from Mike Summers. While ours is definitely a society of many problems, lumping homosexuality in with murder and rape seemed rather ignorant to me—thus negating this person's opinion as one that any enlightened and intelligent person would deem valid. I have several gay and lesbian friends, and none have exhibited any behavior or attitudes that should cause them to be grouped with such heinous acts. I suggest to Mr. Summers that he think hard about his harsh judgment of good people who are just like you and me in all aspects of life that really count.

Scott Martin
New Hampshire

I think people have too much time on their hands. I thought musicians were open, free-thinking types. The only thing that would offend me is if you ran more ads and fewer articles. Please, in this world under a magnifying glass, don't buckle. They can always turn the page.

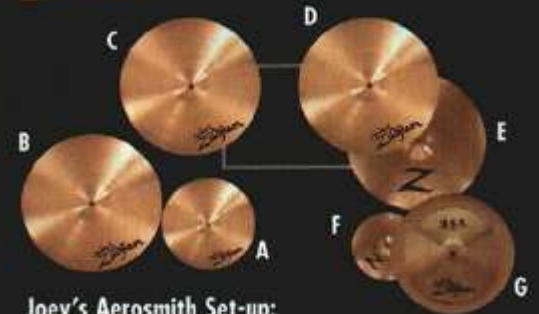
Gene Grala
Bristol, CT

I was surprised to see so many people mad about the Tommy Lee ad. I was even more surprised to see a letter of complaint from Peter Erskine! My friends and I (all fifteen

"One of the great Rock drummers of all time."

Dennis Chambers on Joey Kramer

"Joey is one of the great Rock drummers of all time. So many drummers grew up listening to Aerosmith and have imitated his grooves... not enough people appreciate how influential he has been. One of the few Rock drummers that can really groove and today his playing is fresher and hipper than ever."



Joey's Aerosmith Set-up:

A. 14" A Rock HiHats Brilliant
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C. 20" A Medium Crash Brilliant
D. 20" A Medium Thin Crash Brilliant
E. 21" Z Custom Mega Bell Ride
F. 13" Z Custom HiHats
G. 18" A China High Brilliant

Zildjian Joey Kramer Artist Series Drumsticks

Joey Kramer on Zildjian:

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years old) thought the ad was great!

I think we drummers sometimes take ourselves too seriously. We should lighten up, and realize that we all have something in common: We all play drums! We should also quit censoring stuff. The great Frank Zappa fought for this.

Colin McAllister
via Internet

Having grown up in rural country, I have smelled pig pens up close and can tell you that only the pigs like it. As drummers, I think we should learn from and respect each other as a broad-reaching family. Tommy, I think you went too far. Little kids read this mag. More importantly, their parents do. Was it your point to make it even harder for the kids who are trying to get their parents to respect them as musicians? You haven't helped put drummers up front, just yourself.

Matt Crawford
Eva, AL

How you could allow a blatant heterosexist comment like "Ours is a society with homosexuality, murder, witchcraft, rape, and much worse on prime-time television" to slip into your magazine is beyond me. You would not let a comment slandering African-Americans, Jews, or women into your magazine. *MD* usually does a good job of keeping political and religious sentiments out of the publication, but this time you made a mistake.

John Donahoe
via Internet

While I agree with Mike Summers' defense of the Tommy Lee/Paiste ad, I *do not* agree that homosexuality can in any way be equated with "murder, witchcraft, or rape." Plenty of homosexual musicians, male and female, have graced the pages of your magazine (whether they were "out" or not).

I know certain letters are printed to spark controversy, but I sincerely hope that *MD* does not subscribe to a homophobic attitude towards gay and lesbian musicians. It is sad to see that some people care more about sexual orientation than about *music,* a universal language.

Matthew Payne
Seattle, WA

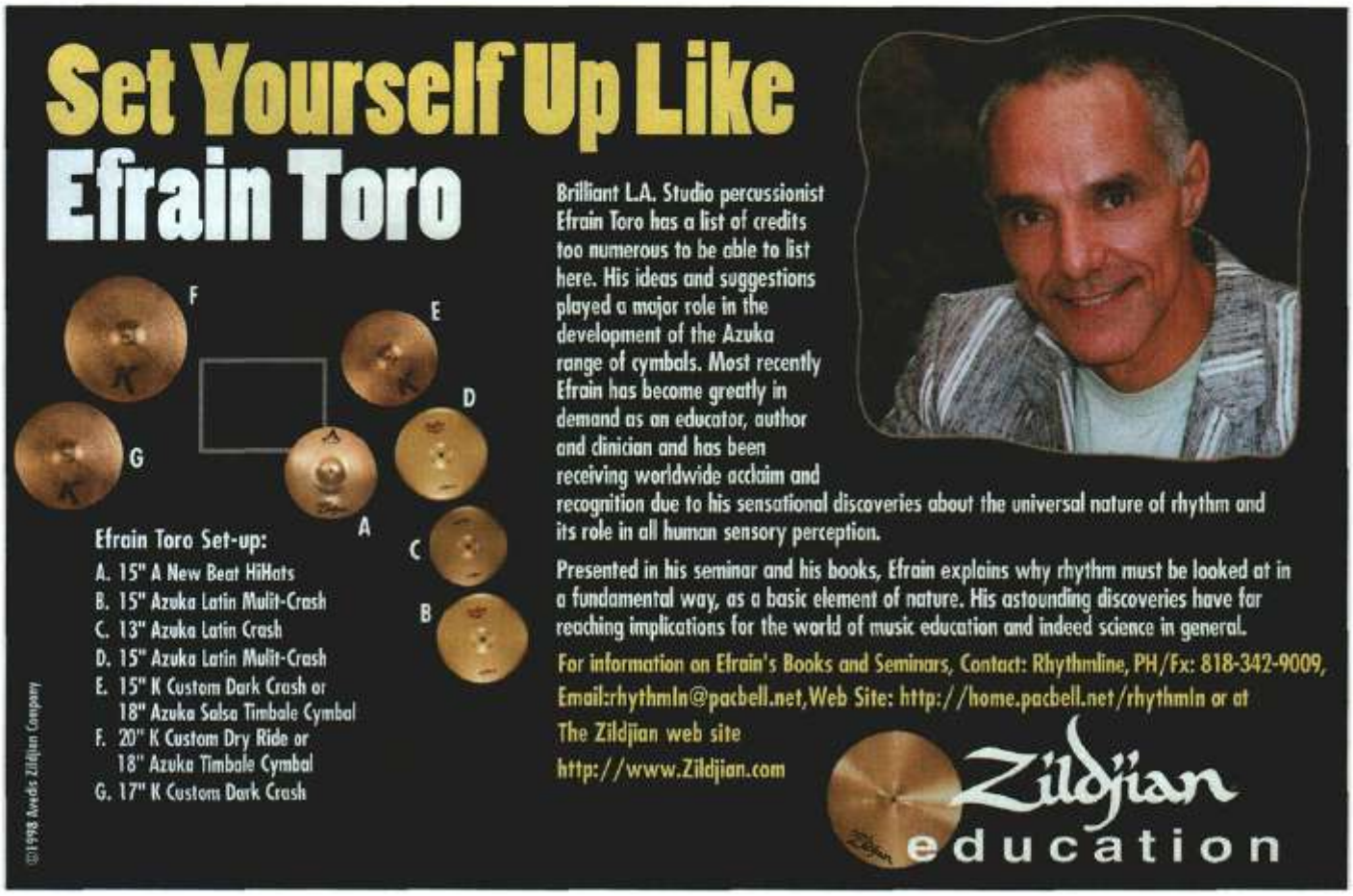
I remained detached from the ongoing controversy regarding the Paiste ad until I read Tommy Lee's own comment in your Jan. '98 issue: "I have only tried to bring the drummer from behind UP FRONT! I think I've done just that!" Jeez, Mr. Lee, correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe the first drummer to accomplish "just that" in the eyes, ears, and hearts of the general public was Gene Krupa, about sixty years ago.

Jim Miller
Philadelphia, PA

Editor's note: January's Readers' Platform *is notable for the additional controversy it has created. Following are representative examples of responses to several more letters.*

RE: CANTOR ON SEXTON

Almost every month, letters appear from readers who are upset that so-and-so was featured in *Modern Drummer.* The most recent of these was Philip Cantor's in the January '98 edition slamming Chad Sexton. I am sick of hearing these kinds of complaints. Let me remind people like this that *MD* is a magazine for drummers of many interests and backgrounds. I do not expect


Set Yourself Up Like
Efrain Toro
Brilliant L.A. Studio percussionist Efrain Toro has a list of credits too numerous to be able to list here. His ideas and suggestions played a major role in the development of the Azuka range of cymbals. Most recently Efrain has become greatly in demand as an educator, author and clinician and has been receiving worldwide acclaim and recognition due to his sensational discoveries about the universal nature of rhythm and its role in all human sensory perception.
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F. 20" K Custom Dry Ride or 18" Azuka Timbale Cymbal
G. 17" K Custom Dark Crash
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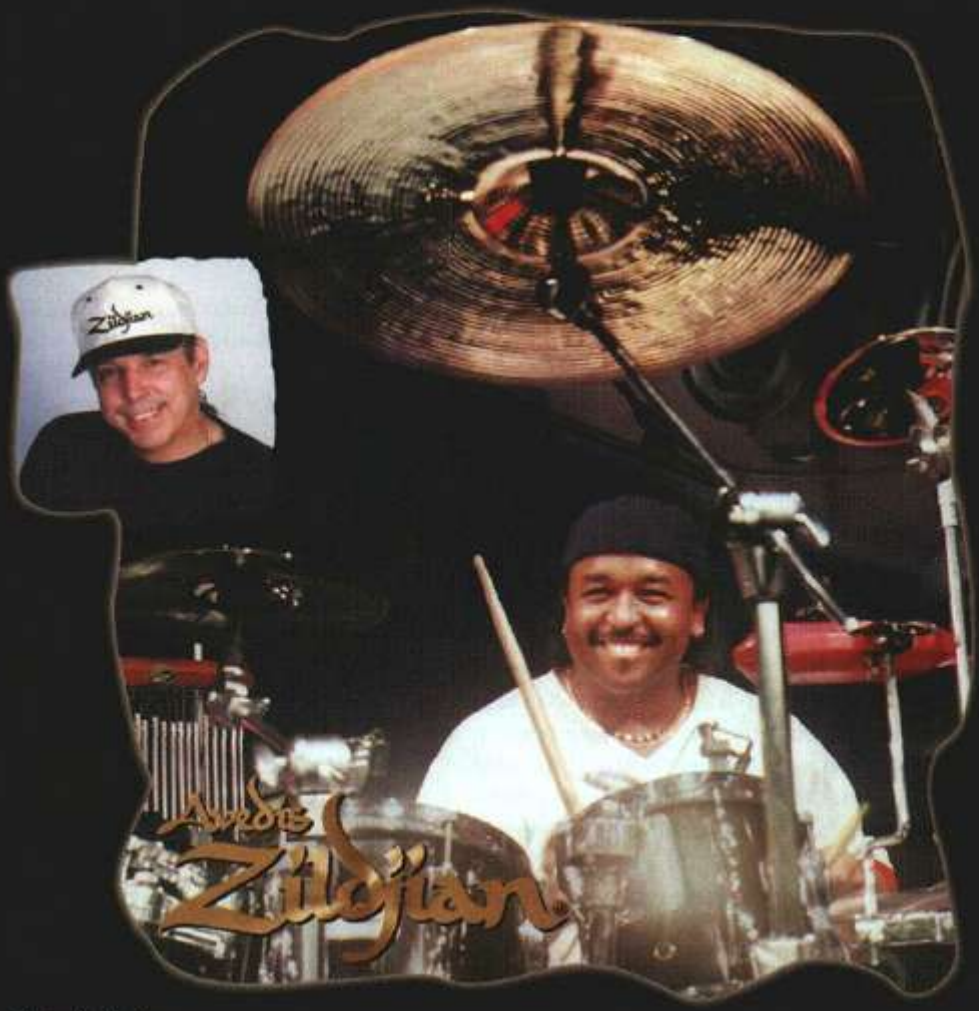
"When I first heard Carter, it literally stopped me in my tracks."

Nashville Great Eddie Bayers on Carter Beauford



"I was in the studio between sessions, and a video had just come on. I literally stopped in my tracks. 'Who is that?' I just had to know who it was. It was the Dave Matthews Band. Carter's playing is so unique and individual. He plays with so much intensity, it inspires me to play."

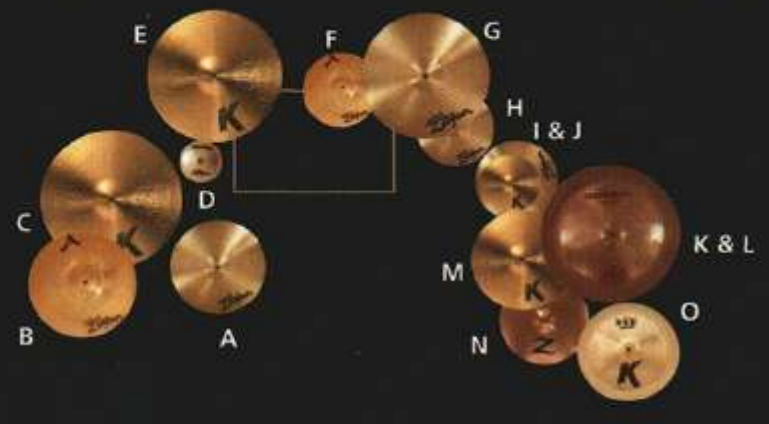
Carter Beauford on Zildjian:

"My cymbals have voices that reflect the unique musical influences that make up this band."

"To me, my A's and Z's represent a rock influence; I use them when I'm jamming around Dave's and Stefan's riffs. When Boyd is doing his bluegrass-cajun thing, I like to lay into my A Custom's. And when Leroi is doing his 'Coltrane' the K's do it for me."

Carter's Set-up:

A. 14" A New Beat HiHats
B. 16" A Custom Crash
C. 20" K Ride Brilliant
D. 6" ZIL-BEL
E. 19" K Dark Crash Thin
F. 10" A Custom Splash
G. 18" A Medium Crash
H. 10" A Splash Brilliant
I. 12" A Splash
J. 8" K Splash Brilliant
K. 20" Oriental China Trash
L. 18" Oriental China Trash on top of K
M. 14" K Dark Crash Thin Brilliant
N. 13" Z Dyno Beat HiHats
O. 14" K Mini China with rivets



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to be a major fan of every drummer to appear within the pages of every month's issue, but I can honestly say that I have never been let down. There is always something within every issue that enlightens me.

As a drummer who is basically a nobody, I am always interested in hearing how anybody who's anybody in the music industry made their break—and anything else they'd like to share about music and drumming. This includes Chad Sexton, Ringo Starr, Jim Sonefeld, Dave Grohl, and all the other talented drummers who have been the target of some ignorant reader's jealousy. Chad Sexton is an amazing drummer, and I found his feature article very interesting. It seems to me that the likes of Philip Cantor (a name which I have never seen on any album cover by the way) have a lot to learn about music, drumming, and the music industry. Keep up the good work *MD.*

Jeff Wakolbinger
Decatur, IL

While Mr. Cantor has a right to his opinion, calling alternative pop-rock music mere "noise" and believing it has "lowered the bar necessary to be considered a musician" is a bit misguided. It's a reaction to this very sort of academic snobbery that has led many musicians to simply make music with the skills they have. Music is for everybody, not just the technical "elite."

Matthew Payne
Seattle, WA

Mr. Cantor's lack of integrity is appalling, and his implication that there is a "bar" of measurement for musicianship is preposterous. The very artists whom he praises *MD* for interviewing would be the *first* to disagree with his prejudiced theories.

Jes Linares
Franklin, TN

Mr. Cantor should have paid closer attention to Jim DeRogatis' interview in which Sexton talks at length about his five years in drum corps and the rudimental lessons he learned from that experience and from several drum instructors. In the interviewer's words: "That's out of step with a lot of alternative rock players. A lot of drummers in this genre learn to play just by playing to records." Mr. Cantor could learn a lot from open-minded, diverse players like Chad Sexton if he would open his ears before forming his opinions.

Kevin Ridolfi
via Internet

RE: McCORMACK ON ATHLETE ADS

I have been a professional musician for over thirteen years, and as such I've had the opportunity to see, hear, and play on instruments from most of the major drum-related manufacturers. I believe that Steve McCormack, like myself and many *MD* readers, is well aware of what is worth spending his hard-earned money on. Thus his choices won't be swayed by an advertisement featuring an athlete who has very meager attachments to the music industry. I also think it's understandable to feel a certain amount of resentment when you have dedicated a fair chunk of your life to being a musician, and then you see someone whose life's ambition has been something completely unrelated getting the (perceived) accolades of a drum endorsement.

However, those who share in this feeling can take solace in knowing that we aren't the people these ads were intended for. Strange as it may sound, millions of dollars' worth of drums are sold each year to people who have never heard of Steve Gadd or Dennis Chambers, but who *have* heard of Mike Piazza or Dominic Roussel. As someone who has endorsements with various companies—including one of the companies involved in the ads—I can tell you that these athletes' value to the company (in terms of overall return for investment) must be worthwhile, otherwise the advertisers wouldn't continue to run the ads.

So there is obviously some merit to this advertising. The only remaining question is whether or not we, the readers of *Modern Drummer,* are the correct target audience for it. I like to think that we are not, and that the advertisers will move their "athlete ads" to a less informed forum where they will do them more good. However, if we continue to see the ads in *Modern Drummer* I must assume that they are appealing to this audience and therefore have just as much validity as ads that feature what I would consider to be legitimate spokespersons.

Matthew Atkins
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

I think it's great that people from another field of entertainment are promoting drumming and music. I have no great love of jocks; in my high school days the band sold candy bars to buy sheet music while the football team got new helmets each year out of the school's pocketbook. But drummers and jocks are both often seen as just big, dumb cavemen. If ads like these can help to attract the kids who look up to the sports figures to the art of drumming—or maybe make a parent think twice before pulling their kid out of band to play baseball—then all the better.

Matt Crawford
Eva, AL

Editor's note: Finally, some readers actually wrote to us about January '98's articles:

LA PERCUSSIONIST ROUNDTABLE

Thank you for your January cover story on the "LA Percussionist Roundtable." As a drummer, I tend to forget the significance of percussionists within all forms of music. It made me aware of how percussion is used not only in live music, but also in movies, commercials, etc. Also, hearing experts like Conte, Castro, and Porcaro talk about the details of their area in music gave me a fuller appreciation of the entire rhythm section, and has allowed me to hear grooves within songs that before I wouldn't have thought to pick up on.

Kristen Vosmaer
via Internet

JASON MARSALIS

Who cares what Jason Marsalis thinks of every other drummer in the business? What about his own playing, which your article in the January '98 issue almost completely ignored? The interview quickly became a vehicle for the youngest Marsalis to prove he knows his stuff about famous jazz and fusion recordings. Try interviewing up & coming drummers who are confident about their *own* abilities.

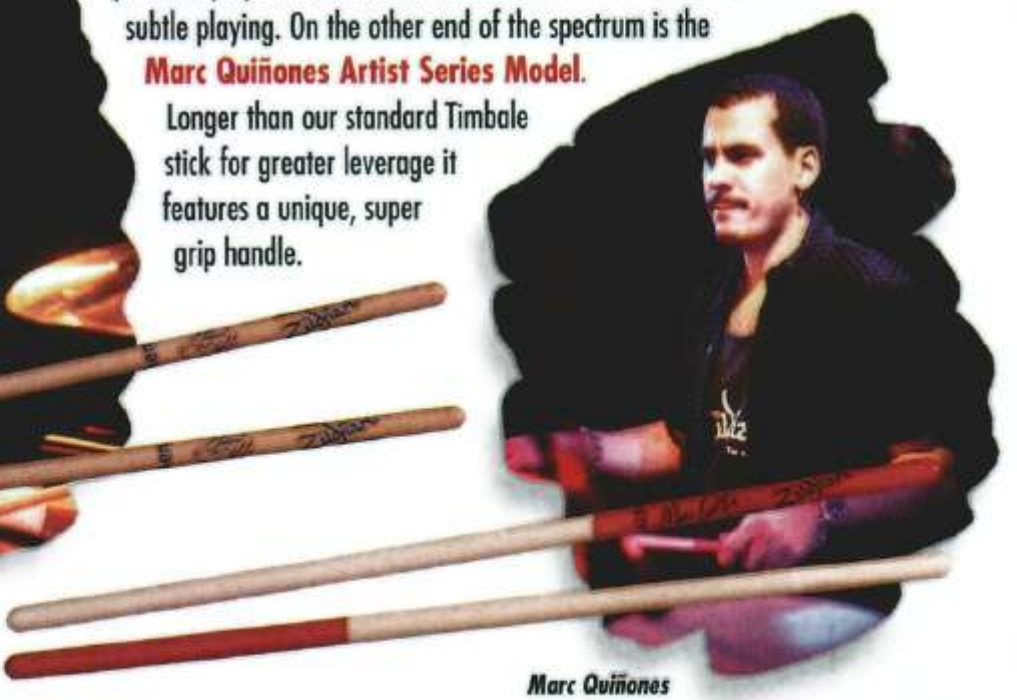
Ben Mann
via Internet

Groundbreakers & Groundshakers

No percussionist has broken as much new ground and created as much excitement in recent times as Giovanni Hidalgo. The fact that he selected Zildjian Drumsticks to make his new Timbale sticks is a testament to the dynamic movement to Zildjian in the Drumstick marketplace. This flow continues to younger stars such as Marc Quiñones, who put every piece of their equipment to the test with groundshaking playing and rigorous touring.

Giovanni Hidalgo

The **Giovanni Hidalgo Artist Series Model** is a short Timbale stick that provides pinpoint control and balance. Perfect for intricate and subtle playing. On the other end of the spectrum is the **Marc Quiñones Artist Series Model.** Longer than our standard Timbale stick for greater leverage it features a unique, super grip handle.



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Murumba's

Michael Faue, Kevin Winard, And Kalani

The Power Of Three

For percussionists Kalani, Michael Foue,and Kevin Winard, their musical unit Murumba, is a true labor of love. What started out as an idea for a percussion ensemble to do clinics and a few gigs turned into a full project for the group. The trio, who individually have worked with artists like Yanni, Kenny Loggins, Quincy Jones, Mel Torme, and Sergio Mendez, recently released their own critically acclaimed CD, *Origins,* recording it on their own and now publicizing it themselves as well.

"We used the resources we had," explains Kalani, "I have a studio, Mike brought an ADAT over from his house, and we begged, borrowed, and pleaded for whatever else we needed. And there were a lot of long nights."

Musically, the album came together easily, "We fell into our roles naturally," Winard says, "I did drumset, Kalani did most of the djembe and African kind of stuff, and Mike played a lot of the mallets, We went on a computer and mapped it out, sort of like, Do you want a conga solo on this? Do you want a djembe solo on that? And we split it up. We came in with the conscious decision to not make it a 'Dig how many styles I can play and check out how long our solos can go' album. The songs came first,"

"From the beginning we wanted to go after radio airplay," admits Kalani. "I remember having conversations about song length, arrangements, and grooves. We chopped things down to four and a half minutes or under because it's a fact of life that a tune over that length is not going to get radio airplay."

Kalani insists the pop format hasn't diminished the group's priorities, though. "There are a lot of percussion groups out there playing what they call 'world music,' but to me, this is *real* world music, it's as if this band was formed with members from different countries. We're using Brazilian instruments on quasi-Caribbean grooves and Cuban instruments on African grooves. I think we did a really good job of blending everything, but still keeping the flavors there," Some of the instruments used by the trio include djembe, udu talking drum, bata congas, timbales, bongos, repinique, cuica, surdo, tamborim, shakers, vibes, marimba, and steel drums.

> "There are a lot of percussion groups out there playing what they call 'world music,' but to me, this is real world music. It's as if this band was formed with members from different countries."
> —Kalani

Because the individual members had amassed a lot of equipment over the years, the project cost them under $6,000, including mixing, mastering, and album art. And the Los Angeles Musicians' Union has been helpful at getting the record out to the public, "They've recently started a program to help all the members who put out their own CDs, so the dues are finally paying off," Faue says, "They're sending our record out to radio stations, and it's been received really well."

Everyone involved with Murumba is working hard to increase distribution. But the sure way to find the album is either through the internet, at //members.aol.com/murumba (where you can actually download some of the music), or by writing to the group at 11862 Baiboa Blvd., Suite 159, Granada Hills, CA 91344-8017,

Next summer Murumba will go out with a bass player and another drummer to play festivals, no doubt booking shows themselves, "All three of us have talked about how the older we get, the more we have to take control of our own careers and follow through in every possible way," Winard says. "This project means a lot to all of us. We ail met through Cal State Northridge, so it's neat that, after all these years and having gone our separate ways and worked with different people, we're back together,"

Robyn Flans

Left to right: Kalani, Kevin Winard, and Michael Faue

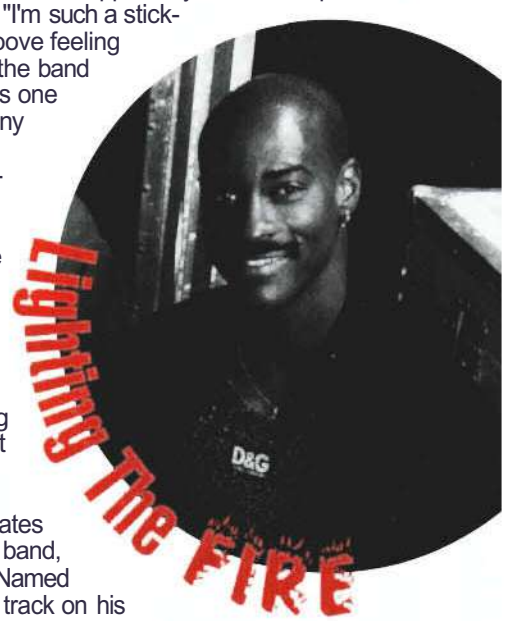
SONNY EMORY

The new Earth, Wind & Fire record, *In The Name Of Love,* signals a return to grassroots sounds and funk grooves. Occasionally, cheesy sequenced drums rear their ugly heads, as on "Rock It." Then *whap!*—in one bar Sonny Emory vanquishes them with a killing backbeat reminiscent of mentor Jeff Porcaro: "Maurice [White, EWF founder] and I got together on that intro, thinking, 'Let's fake them out a little bit.'

"I have such a passion for music," Sonny adds, "and, of course, for playing the drums. I can enjoy myself playing a lot of stuff or just laying a groove." EWF's 1996 *Greatest Hits Live* CD documents both extremes. On "Africano," Sonny fires off a barrage of singles and doubles, all the while maintaining a wide funk groove and catching the horn stings. This is pure Sonny Emory, and you can hear the crowd roar its approval.

In the studio, however, chances looked bleak that Emory—or real drums, period—would figure heavily in the mix, until recently. The final version of *In The Name Of Love,* though, features Sonny playing on all of the tracks but one. He even co-wrote the first single, "Revolution." Why the about-face? "Maurice had produced too many records where the computer dominated," Sonny explains. "Basically, he didn't really have a band and was doing a lot of those records when the band was on hiatus. But I had released my own solo record in Japan, and it was all live tracking. It was also the first time Maurice had seen Verdine [White, bass player] and me record, and he thought, 'Wow, I have a rhythm section!' On this record, sequences were programmed, but tracking live was the number-one priority."

Finally, after ten years' tenure with EWF, Sonny is moving up into management. "We have a very open forum in the Fire. Maurice has passed on a lot of responsibilities to me because he's not there all the time." White's apparently left the shop in good hands. "I'm such a stickler for the groove feeling right and for the band feeling like it's one person," Sonny insists.



Emory carries this attitude to road gigs with Lee Ritenour, Bette Midler, the Crusaders, and Paula Abdul. During his time off at home in Atlanta, he books club dates with his own band, Hypnofunk. Named after the title track on his first solo record on Sun And Moon Records, the unit will be releasing an album shortly. The music—acid jazz, for want of a better description—will be recorded under the watchful eye of Maurice White.

T. Bruce Wittet

Abe Juckes

Manoeuvering Up A Tree

When Abe Juckes joined Treehouse after being a session player for five years and a sideman in Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark, he was excited to be a member of the band. "As a bandmember," the drummer says, "you know instinctively what's going to happen musically, which is one of the things you lose when you're doing a session, because you're meeting the bass player and the guitarist for the first time."

But Juckes had only played three gigs with Treehouse when they went into the studio to record *Nobody's Monkey* for Breaking Records, Hootie & the Blowfish's new Atlantic-distributed label. "We were still meeting one another," Juckes agrees, "but one of the things that made me initially offer my services was that we just got on so well. There was a connection. It sounds really corny, but the four of us are just on the same wavelength—we're all idiots!"

Juckes says he loved the creative process in the studio with the band. "I really like the groove to 'Northern Rainbow,'" he points out. "I'm trying to funk it up a little bit on that one. One of my other favorite tracks is 'Losing Tonight,' because we decided to turn the click track off and do it live. We used a click on nearly all of the album, but that was because of sequences and stuff like that. We recorded the drums and bass analog and then everything else was done digitally on this new Otari 48-track computer. I spent so many years playing to click tracks with OMD that now I forget I'm even using one. But it's nice when it gets turned off sometimes."

Robyn Flans

Marillion's Ian Mosley

This Strange Engine In America

1997 will he remembered us the year of amazing ups and downs for English progressive band Marillion and their drummer. Ian Mosley. The band's latest release. *This Strange Engine*, was plagued by the bankruptcy of their American record company, initially leaving the album unrelcased in the States. Coupled with the lack of support from their previous label, many people thought the band had broken up long ago.

To make things worse. Marillion had lost so much money on their last North American tour, in 1995, that it seemed unlikely they would return. As Mosley explains, the Internet came to their rescue. "When the fans heard the news." he says, "they started a fund drive via the Internet to raise enough money to get us over here. Within a few months they had raised over $50,000." No small feat, the result was a two-month tour.

The band has had no such trouble playing across Europe, where they maintain a strong following. But as Mosley explains, "Everything in Europe is close together, but the distances we have to cover in the States are so much greater. This tour has been the best yet, though. It's been very special for us, and we're already planning a tour for this coming summer."

Michael Bettine

Bobby BORG

ADDING STYLE TO WARRANT

Bobby Borg, who has been playing with Warrant for the past two years, says he's very proud of his work with the group. Besides playing on *Warrant Live '86-97,* released a few months back, Borg appears on their most recent studio release, *Belly To Belly,* some of which he composed.

Belly To Belly features a new direction for the band. "This material is very different from the old stuff," Bobby says. "I think it's more dynamic. It also has more percussion in it. There are a lot of different feels, too. Of course, my favorite tracks are the songs I helped write, 'Feels Good' and 'Indian Giver.' 'Indian' has a section where I turn the beat completely around, which adds a nice syncopated feel to the end of the song. I like the tune 'Vertigo' as well, because it has a funky feel to it that I played a lot of ghost notes on. I'm a big David Garibaldi fan."

The live album contains a drum solo by Borg that he peppers with a variety of styles and feels. "My first objective is to keep the rhythm, the pulse. But I like it to have different levels. I start my solo off playing a linear groove, then break out into a Latin thing that I'm playing with my feet, which I solo on top of with some timbales. The audience seems to really like the section where I play quietly, sometimes with my hands. Of course, I like to end with a frenzy, hopefully bringing the audience to their feet."

Robyn Flans

NEWS

Matt Cameron has been recording with Smashing Pumpkins.

Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez has left Santana. He is currently on tour with the McCoy Tyner Big Band.

Alex Gonzales is currently on a world tour with Mana.

Tony Sevener is on tour with Summercamp.

Jim Christie is on Dwight Yoakam's recently released holiday record, *Come On Christmas.*

Simon Horrocks is on the road with the Freddy Jones Band in support of their recent Capricorn release, *Lucid.*

Don Brewer is on the road with Grand Funk Railroad in support of their two-CD *set, Bosnia,* released last fall.

Abe Cunningham is on tour with Deftones in support of their most recent album, *Around The Fur.*

Shawn Mullen is on the road with Stickmen in support of *Life Colored Green.*

Igor Cavalera is in the studio with Sepultura.

Jay Bellerose is on Talking To Animals' debut record, *Manhole.* However, **Mike Levesque** will be taking over the drum seat from Jay after the record's completion.

Guy Hoffman is in the studio with the Violent Femmes.

Mike Braun is on tour with Hall & Dates.

Mike Radovsky is cutting tracks with Ronna Reeves, as well as co-producing For Kate's Sake.

Our best wishes for a speedy recovery to Shelter's drummer, **Mike White,** who was injured on tour when the band's driver lost control of their van.

David Rokeach recently did gigs with Aretha Franklin and Mark Murphy. He also just finished recording George Brooks' second CD, featuring **Zakir Hussain** and due to be released shortly on Hussain's Moment Records. David is also doing extensive touring with Charlie Musselwhite, and teaching at the Stanford Jazz Workshop and Rhythmic Concepts Jazz Camp.

Grand Rapids, Michigan's Solid Ground, featuring drummer **Tom Postema,** was selected as the winner of the Fifth Annual Jim Beam Country Music Talent Search in a "battle of the bands" competition held in Nashville last November.

Shannon Ford is featured on Paul Simon's new album along with **Robby Ameen.**

Ricky Sebastian has recently played the Blue Note in New York with Tania Maria, as well as in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil with Dianne Reeves and Romero Lubambo. Ricky also continues to work on his solo CD.

Craig Pilo is now touring with Maynard Ferguson.

David Licht is on the Klezmatics' latest, *Possessed.* The band also performed live during the play *A Dybbuk's* New York run at the Public Theater.

Matt Abts is on Gov't Mule's new album, *Dose.*

Paul Motian is *on Nothing Ever Was, Anyway* with Marily Crispell and Gary Peacock.

Jon Christensen is on the Tomasz Stanko Septet's *Litania.*

Bernard Purdie is on Hank Crawford and Jimmy McGriff's *Road Tested.*

D.J. Fontana, Tony Newman, Levon Helm, Gary Burke, Victor Bisetti, and **Randy Ciarlante** are on Paul Burlison's *Train Kept A-Rollin'* (Sweetfish).

Mike Terrana is on Artension's *Phoenix Rising.*

Greg Hall is on Sacred Reich's *Still Ignorant (1987-1997)* (Metal Blade).

Mapex Drum Artists

Carmine Appice
(independent)

Brock Avery
(Zakk Wylde)

Gregg Bissonette
(independent)

Hal Blaine
(LA studio)

Monty Booker
(Bryan White)

Nick D'Virgilio
(Tears For Fears)

Julio Figueroa
(independent)

Jeff Hale
(Waylon Jennings)

David Lauser
(Sammy Hagar)

Walfredo Reyes, Jr.
(Steve Winwood)

Herlin Riley
(Wynton Marsalis)

Tom Roady
(Nashville studio)

Chuck Silverman
(independent)

John Stacy
(Mark Chestnutt)

Raymond Weber
(Harry Connick, Jr.)

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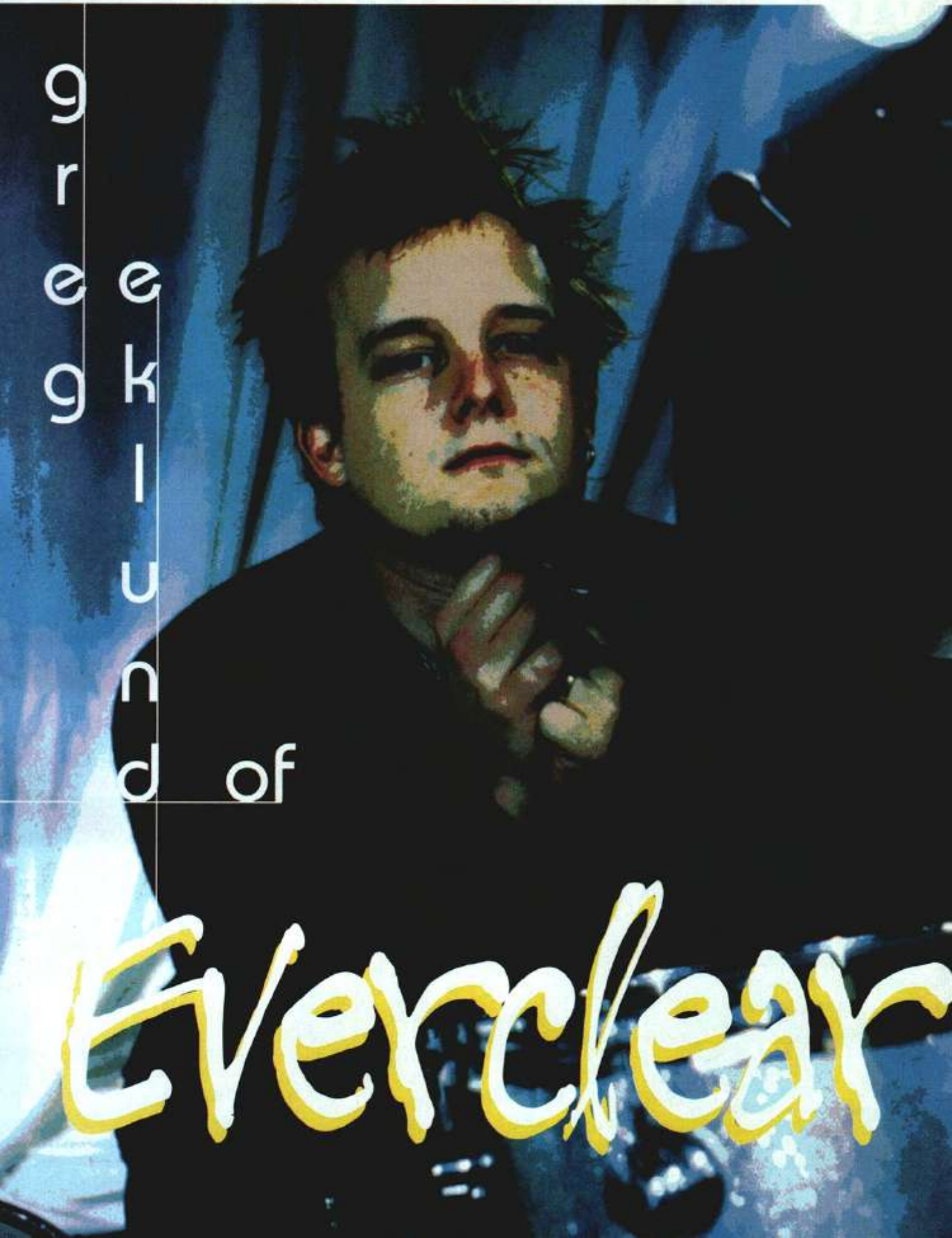


greg eklund of Everclear

by Matt Peiken

There's a drummer somewhere in the Pacific Northwest cursing the day he tried hauling his drumkit down a flight of stairs. One man's fateful injury, though, was Greg Eklund's gain. Three years later, Eklund is still thankful for the odd timing that led him to the drummer's throne for alterna-rockdarlingsEverclear.

I 'd quit my old band and was basically sitting around, just being a screw-up—which was the story of my life up to that point," Eklund says. "I'm still a screw-up at heart, but the band has changed my life in a lot of ways. It's not just the money. I care more about music and drumming now, and I'm a more responsible person because I have a purpose and direction. Every day I live what I'm doing, and I couldn't say that before I joined Everclear."

He certainly has reason these days to wake up happy, Fans have gravitated to Everclear's new disc, *So Much For The Afterglow,* almost as feverishly as they flocked to the band's 1995 breakthrough record. *Sparkle And Fade.* The catchy hooks and folksy charm are still there, but Eklund's performance is more tight, full, and robust. He attributes the differences to musical maturity and the band's unwillingness to leave the mixing room without their heads rocking back and forth. Eklund talked about all those things during a stop along Everclear's recent US club tour.

MP: Let's hear how Everclear happened for you.

GE: Everclear was looking for a drummer, and Art [Alexakis, singer/guitarist/songwriter] was really into this guy from Seattle—good drummer, really cool guy. He'd already auditioned with the band, but Art wanted him to get more familiar with the songs because Everclear had a big tour coming up. The day this guy was supposed to drive down to Portland to rehearse with the band, he lifted his bass drum wrong, fell down something like two flights of stairs, and broke his arm and his fingers. He called Art from the emergency room to tell him what happened, and Art said, "I'm really sorry, but we're leaving for the tour in a week and we need someone *now."* An hour or two later—strictly by coincidence—I called up Art and said, "You don't have to audition anyone else. I'm your man." Now, I didn't know *anything* about what was going on. I didn't know about this other guy, and I had no idea Everclear was about to sign a record deal. I was just into the band and I'd heard they were looking for a drummer.

I lugged all my drums down to the audition in my mom's Honda *Accord.* We did "Nervous And Weird" off their first record, *World Of Noise,* and they offered me the gig right there. Art was like, "Are you ready to starve on the road and eat Taco Bell every night?" I said, "Yeah, totally." I mean, Taco Bell was gourmet food for me at that point. But I thought he was just talking about touring around the Northwest. That's when he told me they were signing a deal and that we were going to *really* tour: New York, San Francisco, everywhere.

MP: Tell me a little about your training as a drummer.

GE: I studied classical, symphonic percussion in high school, but I taught myself to play the drumkit. It's always a little awkward when kids come up to me and ask things like, "How do I play what *you* play?" or "What kind of advice can you give me for being a good drummer?" I basically just tell them to play as often as they can. They need to hit hard and they need to learn a para-diddle. If they can do those two things, there's nothing keeping them from where I am.

Back in school I did marching band, so I have some of those

chops in my bag of tricks. But none of that comes into play with what I do now. And the only reason a paradiddle does is if I'm going around the kit and I have to hit a cymbal, I can double-stick the floor tom to keep my other hand free to cross-stick for the crash. Plus, if you can pull off a fast paradiddle anywhere on the kit, you can come up with some wicked-sounding fills. You'll *sound* like you know what you're doing, even if you don't. Another thing that really helps is having an ear for music—understanding song structure and how you can support that as a drummer.

I have a total respect and appreciation for drummers who can do these amazing things. But I hate to listen to it. The idea of listening to Terry Bozzio in a clinic does nothing for me at all. That doesn't mean he can't smoke me and 99.9% of the other drummers in the world. But the idea of the drumset being used as a solo instrument doesn't sound right to me. I come from the old school, where you're there to support something else. It's not rocket science; it's rock 'n' roll. It's still 2-and-4, and if it's not 2-and-4—if you're doing some 7/8 thing—it's probably not rock 'n' roll.

That doesn't mean that when I was in eleventh grade I didn't try to sound exactly like Stewart Copeland, because I did. I played traditional grip and cranked my snare way up there. And when Jane's Addiction came out, I started putting all these strange backbeats into my own playing. But that's something everyone goes through. Eventually you do what sounds right to *you.* And to me, being technical and trying to work out sticking patterns takes the feel and emotion out of it.

MP: Before Everclear, had you planned on making a career of music?

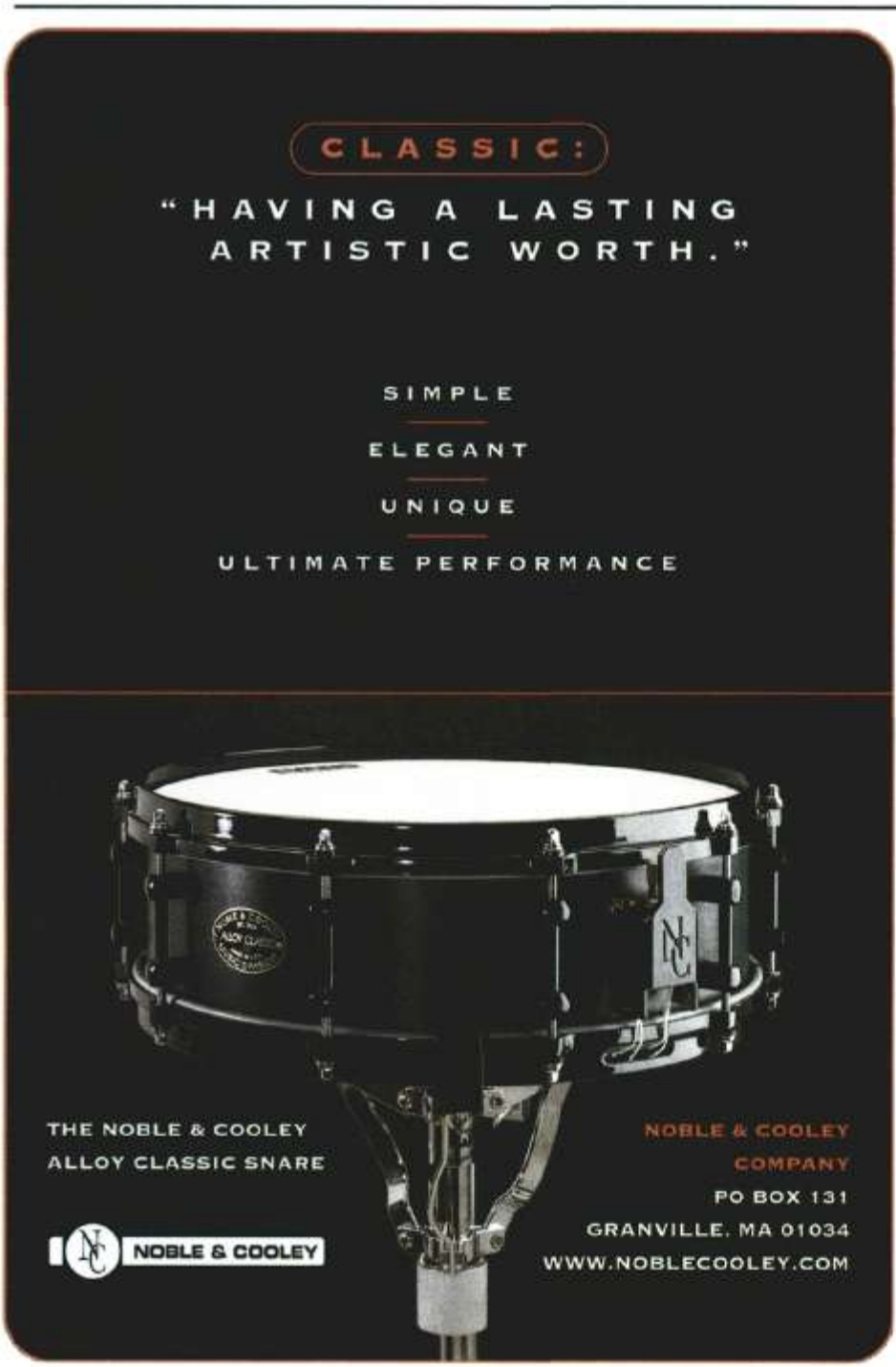
GE: I think it's sort of the elusive dream. To be honest, I was basically a screw-up most of my life, so it was very convenient that music worked out for me. I dropped out of the University of Oregon. And the main reason I went there in the first place was because they had free racquetball.

I met my wife at U of O. I wasn't playing drums at the time. I felt burned out from studying symphonic percussion in Washington, DC, so I was basically failing out of school. She asked me, "Why are you wasting your time and money doing nothing?" Then she asked me, "If time and money were of no consideration, what would you want to do with your life?" I thought about it for a second and said, "Well, I'd want to be a drummer and tour the world in a rock band." And she said, "Well, why don't you just do it? You're not even playing your drums right now." And I'm like, "Yeah, right honey."

But she inspired me to play again. So I dropped out of school and started a band. Six months later we were the biggest band in Eugene, Oregon. Everybody was telling me to get my life together and get a job, and I'd say no, because if my band or some other band wanted me to tour, I wouldn't be able to because I'd have a job I couldn't quit. I didn't want to get tied down to that.

Of course, that makes it sound like I really had this great master plan, while the truth is that it was just an excuse not to get a real job. I was justifying my life as a screw-up. Little did I know that, for *not* having a master plan, everything would just fall into place in such a weird, incredible way.

MP: I heard that making the new record was more labor than love.



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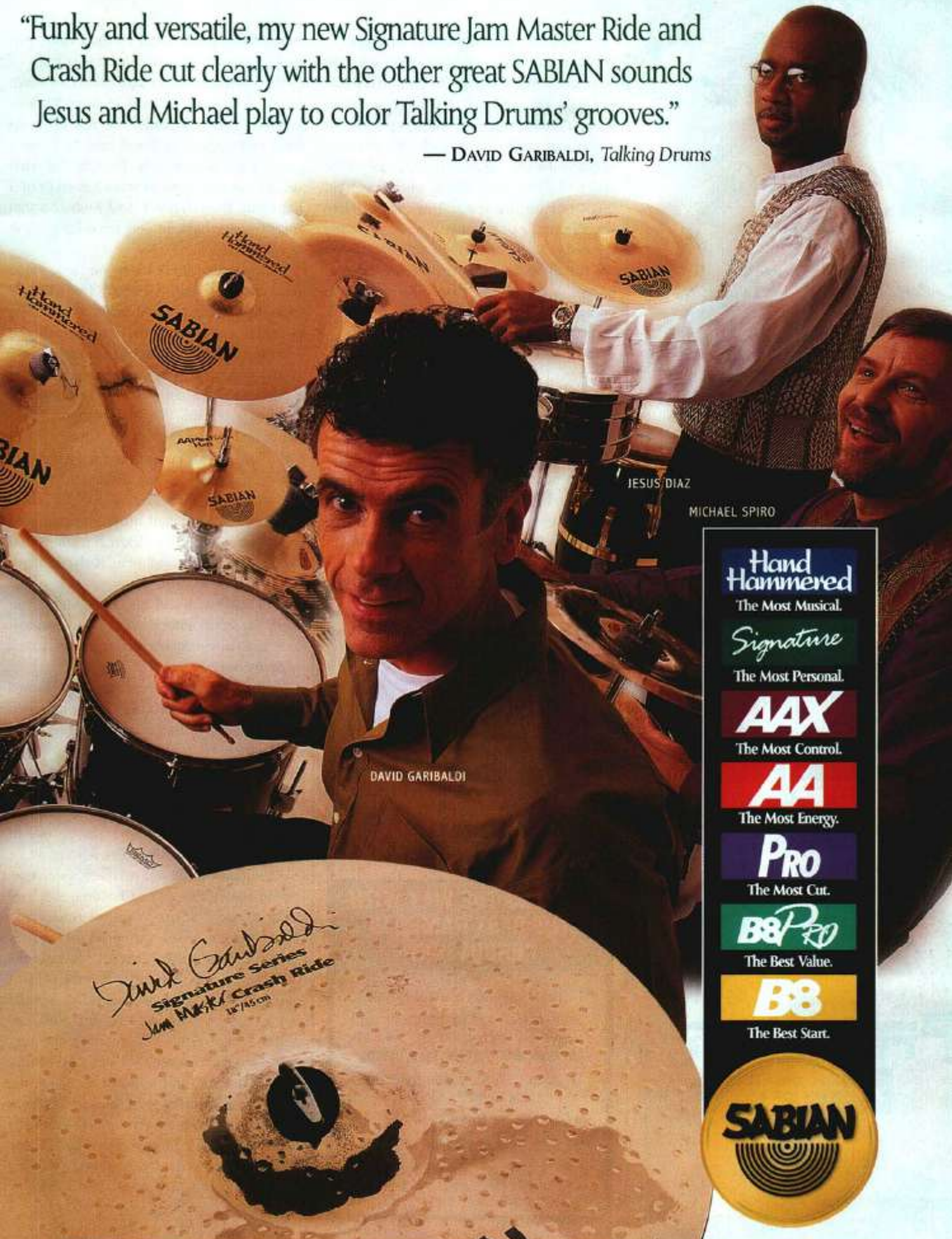
— DAVID GARIBALDI, *Talking Drums*



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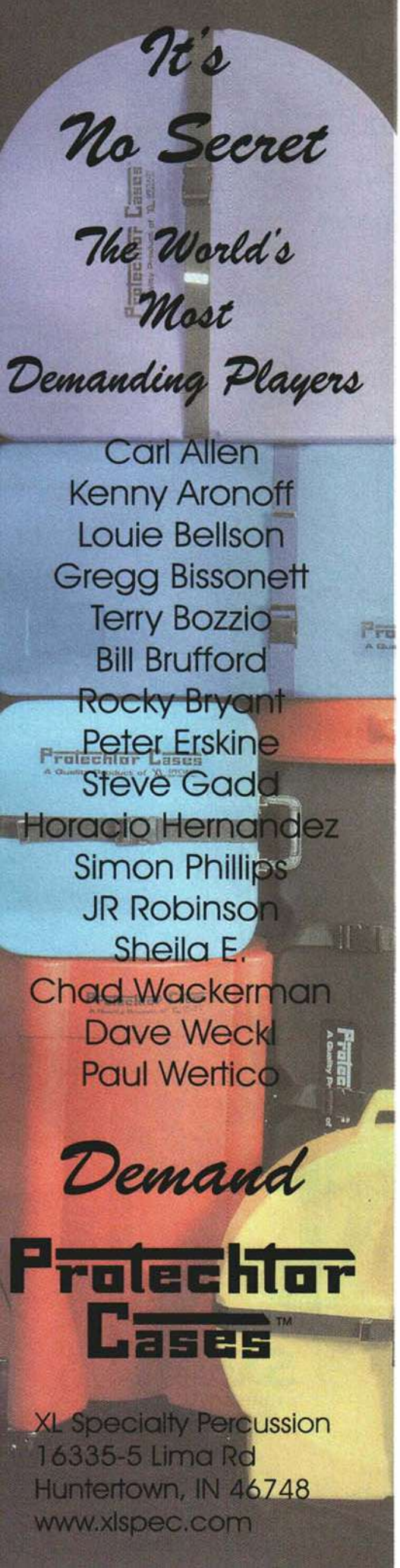

GE: Well, we love the record. But, yeah, it definitely took a lot of labor to get what we were after. We'd wanted to go into the studio right after our last Australian tour—so we could be really tight and sharp—put the record out in the summer of '96, and then maybe take off the next ten months or so, just to be really fresh for when we went back out on the road. But that's when *Sparkle And Fade* really started to hit, and we had to stay out on the road. Plus, when we finally did get to prepare for the new record, we really felt rushed for time. It ended up taking a lot longer to make the record than we thought it would.

It's funny to talk about it now, because the record came out exactly as we wanted it to. But getting to that point was really tough. We ended up only taking two weeks off between that last tour and going into the studio. And that wasn't really like time off, because we had to rehearse the new songs and get them down. When we came off touring, we'd all reached the point of physical and mental exhaustion, unlike anything I'd ever experienced. Craig [Montoya, bassist] had literally checked himself into the hospital for exhaustion just as we started to rehearse the new songs.

We eventually recorded twenty or more songs. But when Art was in New York to mix the record, he called the rest of us up on a conference call and said he wasn't happy enough with it. He thought that what we'd done to that point wasn't enough of a departure from *Sparkle And Fade.* So that meant going back in and reworking some of the songs.

At the time, I think I was too close to the record to hear what Art heard. But when he brought back the mixed tapes, I definitely agreed it was the right move to go back and redo some things. A lot of people think we dumped the whole record and started over again, but that's not true. We kept most of the basic tracks. We just dumped some songs and brought in new ones that Art had written in the meantime. And it was mainly just a matter of adding different textures and instrumentation and a lot of the vocal harmonies. We ended up jumping around to different studios to learn the songs and demo them and record them, then piecing it all together.

MP: How much did all that distract you from the same natural energy and enthusiasm that made *Sparkle And Fade* such a great record?

GE: It was kind of interesting. Art wanted to rehearse and demo the new songs he'd written. Our publishing company has a studio in their basement, which they gave us for something like $200 a day. So we demoed Art's songs. Then we went into another studio to record, and we spent an entire day doing the drum track on one of the songs, "So Much For The Afterglow."

The demos came out sounding awesome, but in the studio, it just became this real labor to get it down. What we finally got, performance-wise, was probably better than the demo. But it didn't really come close in the way it felt. It was sort of painful to get the right take. After agonizing all day over this basic drum, bass, and guitar track, we threw it up on the speakers and played the song. We were all sitting there listening, and nobody was rocking. We were just sitting there kinda flat. So as a reference point, we put up a DAT of the demo, pumped it through the board just to compare, and instantly everybody's doing the head-bobbin'. We knew right away.

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We had pulled off something there in that $200-a-day demo studio that, for some reason, we couldn't do in this real expensive studio. We just couldn't reproduce that same feel. So we kept the bass and drum tracks from the demo sessions, and that's what's on the record. That sort of reinforced what we already knew about ourselves. We're not virtuoso musicians, so the feel *has* to be there.

MP: So what do you think made the difference, for you, between nailing the feel and missing it?

GE: I just think it was being fresh on the song, playing it that first time with a lot of energy. If you're doing take after take, after a while there's no way you're going to have that enthusiasm in your playing. You can't fake that. You might play well *technically,* but at least for me, feel isn't something that can be practiced. You either have the juices flowing or you don't,

MP: Do you think the songs you did in the demo studio had a better feel than the ones you did at A&M studios throughout the record?

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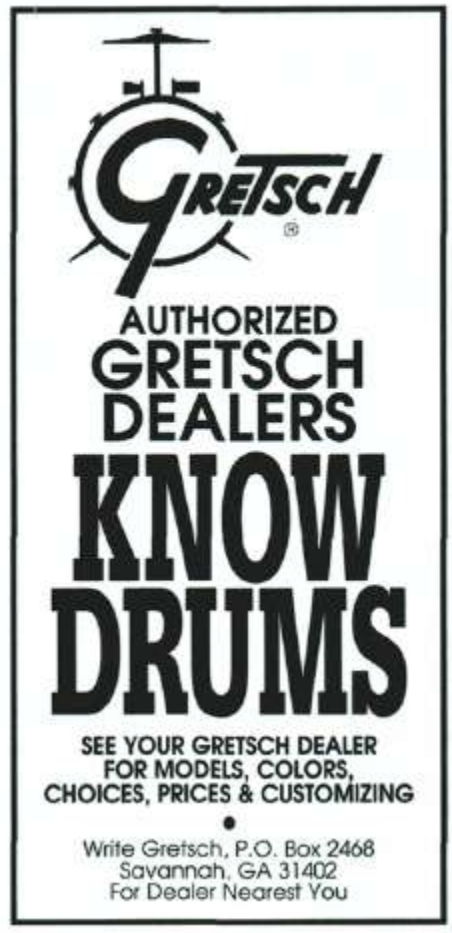
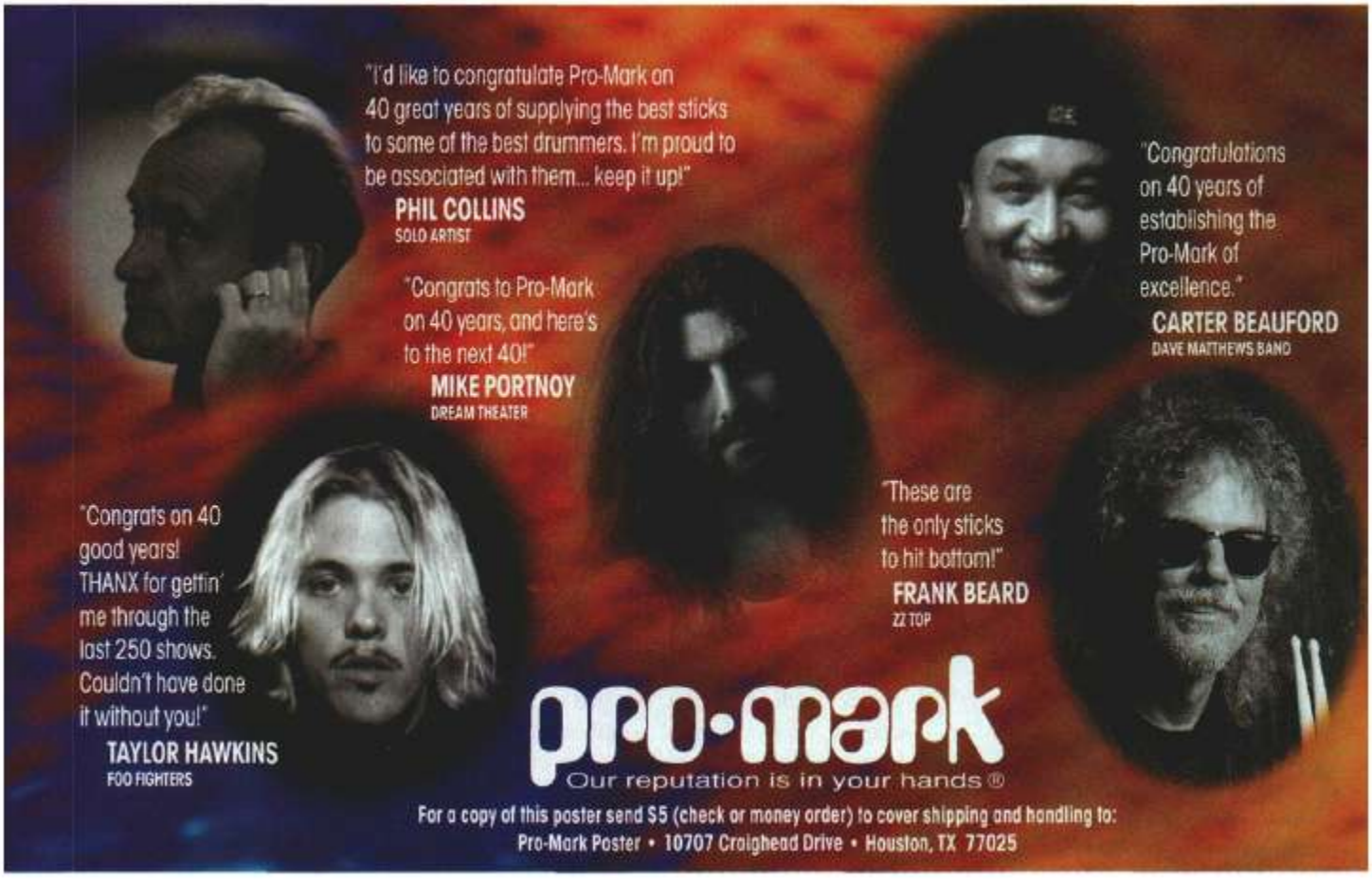
GE: Not necessarily, because a lot of what we used from there came on first and second takes, too. We did have problems there, though, because A&M is so big and we had trouble getting the drums to sound good. We had two kits set up: a monster kit in the big room, with one of the kicks and a snare coming from the kit Dave Grohl used on *Nevermind.* And then I had a ridiculously small jazz combo kit in the other room with an 18" kick and a 10" tom. That was Art's idea. He wanted everything to be varied and different. *Sparkle And Fade* was just this raw approach—set up the mic's and go—and we did it in about two weeks because we didn't have money to buy time. But this time around, we had a lot more room to experiment and try things. We discovered that there's a good side and potentially a downside to that. The potential downfall is that you can over-produce things and make a sterile recording—and *Sparkle And Fade* definitely is more raw and not as slick at *Afterglow.* But on the upside, at least as far as the drums go, we were able to play around with sounds and feels.

On some songs, you can actually hear both kits. On "Father Of Mine," I was playing along to a click so the drums would sync up. I started out playing the small drums and then put the monster drums on top of that. When Art mixed the song, he only used both kits during the chorus, but he mixed them slightly out of phase to make this real full sound. Then when it went back to the verse, he tightened them back up so it had a lot of punch.

MP: You sound a lot tighter on this record...a lot more in control of your tempo and dynamics. Did you feel more in command of what you were doing in the studio?

GE: On one level, I like to think I've improved a lot since we made *Sparkle And Fade,* just by touring and through experience. I'd only been in the band for about a month when we made *Sparkle And Fade,* and most of those songs were written before I joined. The new record is a lot more groove-oriented than the last one, and that fits in more with my natural style. But the first month's session of making this record was really hard for me, mainly

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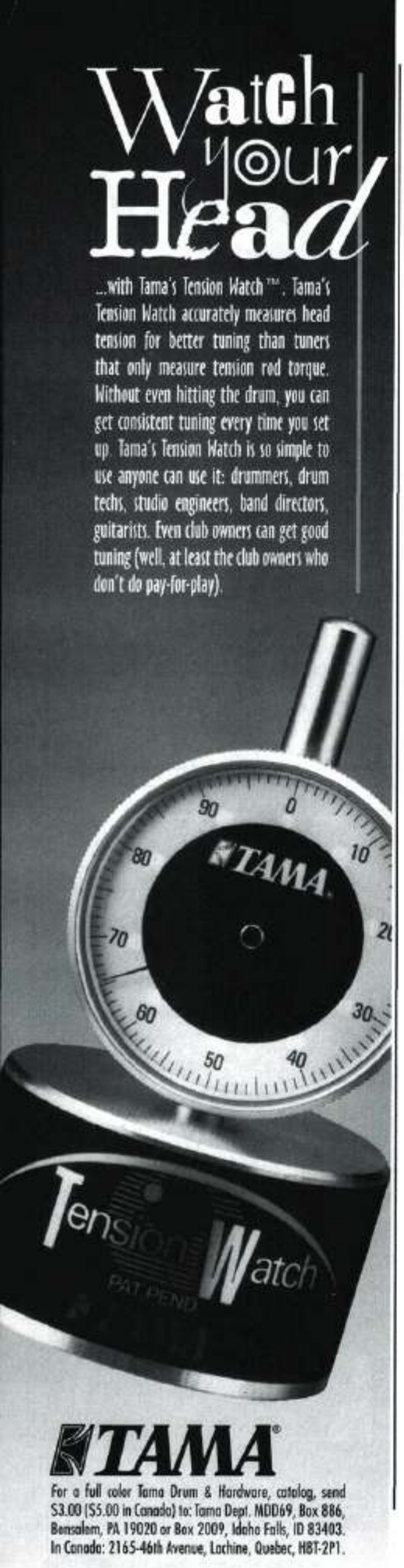
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because I was just so exhausted. It was so tough to come off the road after being out for so long and then to go right back into the studio and try to be creative.

Even before we went in, I knew we were going to do most of the songs on this record with a click, and that we were even going to have some drum loops. We had a guy named Lars Fox come in. He used to be in this band called Grotus, and he's an old friend of Art's. He added some loops and sounds. Again, we knew going in that this would be a completely different approach to recording than *Sparkle And Fade.*

This was the first time I'd ever tried playing to a click, but I wasn't really intimidated by it at all. However, I *was* really physically run down, so I had a pretty hard time on some of the faster songs. "Amphetamine," for example, is really fast and aggressive, and it was hard to get it tight. The fact that I couldn't play what was in my head totally weighed on me. It was very frustrating.

Another thing that really hurt me about that song is where we recorded it. At A&M, the drums were incredibly loud. We had my headphones maxed out so I could hear the click and also hear the bass and guitar. But we had to wait a while between takes because the speaker cones inside the headphones would get so hot that they'd burn my ears. Literally, when I was playing, I'd shift my head to the right or left so the cone would lay off one part of my ear and start burning another.

And of course, when you're in the studio, nothing else goes down on tape until the drums are right. So the pressure's there. Nobody was leaning on me or anything, but I was pressing myself to get it right and consistent all the way through.

You may not be able to hear the difference between the songs from the first session and the three or four songs we did after that first mix. But I can tell the difference, just by how much more relaxed and confident I was. Listening back now, I think "I Will Buy You A New Life" is one of the best drum tracks I've ever done. It was just one of those songs where I hit the groove on the first take. It's one of those classic studio stories: a late night in Portland, dim lights, and just one or two takes.

"So Much For The Afterglow" is another fast song, but I had my strength back and it just grooved. There's also a song we recorded in that demo phase called "Songs From An American Movie," which didn't make it onto the record. I think it's one of the best Everclear songs ever written. Unfortunately, Art couldn't finish up the vocals in time. We'll probably use it on the next record.

MP: You mentioned that you feel you're a better player now, just from the amount of playing you've done in the past three years.

GE: Yeah, even though I haven't sat down and played a kit by myself in a long, long time. Every time I play, it's with these guys. I don't know that I've changed so much as a player; it's just that the new songs fit into my style better. I mean, it's not as if I've suddenly just discovered groove playing, because my old band before Everclear was very much into that Primus sort of chopsy thing. But I see my role in this band differently: using whatever skills and creativity I have to enhance Art's ideas and bring the best out of the song. It's not about proving I can do a triple ratamacue, and that's what's great about being in a songwriting band.

But getting back to your question, if there's any real change for us it's that we have a lot more confidence now as a band. Like I said, we're not virtuosos, but maybe now we're more open to stepping out on a limb and trying something beyond our means. Take the keyboard part at the beginning of "Everything To Everyone." None of us knows how to play keyboard. But we thought this part would sound cool there, so we gave it a shot. There's a drum loop on "One Hit Wonder" that was created off percussion parts I played, and the basic loop is me playing. There's a lot of shakers and other things going on there, which Lars spliced up.

MP: I like the intro beat you play on "One Hit Wonder." It's aggressive and tight, but it also has a little personality. Was that Art's concept or yours?

GE: I think that was inspired by some of the music we'd listened to right before going in to record. The new Sheryl Crow record has some loops, but not dance loops. They were percussion loops with acoustic drums over the top of that, so the loops were there to provide sort of this hypnotic

rhythm effect. It was Art's idea to put a loop in there for this song.

It was really cool because we put this backwards cymbal *swooooooosh* on there, and I played these wooden spoons that are attached together. Another time I started playing this New Orleans blues-jazz kind of stomp with the cowbell on the offbeat. Art really liked that, but he wanted me to simplify it. So we recorded it and cut it into the computer so Lars could loop it. He took the best eight-bar part of it and made the basic loop, and then I recorded just a real simple part on the kit to go on top of that. Then this monster snare roll comes in and leads into the rest of the song. What was cool was that we set up a P.A. in this tiny demo studio and played to the loop like we would in a show: no headphones, but through monitor speakers. We weren't worried about sound isolation because it was just going to be a demo. Little did we know it would come out so great that we'd use it on the record.

MP: Now that life has totally changed for you, how long will this last?

GE: We've actually talked about this, and we don't see really going beyond five or six records, at the most. All my favorite bands in history have never really been viable beyond that point. They might still be making records, but their best music is behind them. I think most bands only have a certain life span to them. So right now, we're thinking about maybe another two or three records.

But I really hope to be drumming beyond the days when Everclear ceases to be. Even now, I'd like to do some side projects if I had the opportunity. I've taught myself a little guitar and I've got a ukulele. I've got marimbas, guitars, bass guitars, and congas at home, and I've always been into eight-track recording. What would be really cool at some point is composing soundtrack music. And at some point, I'd like to front my own band and play guitar. The day I can go on stage as a guitarist, I'll be happy—even if it's terrible!

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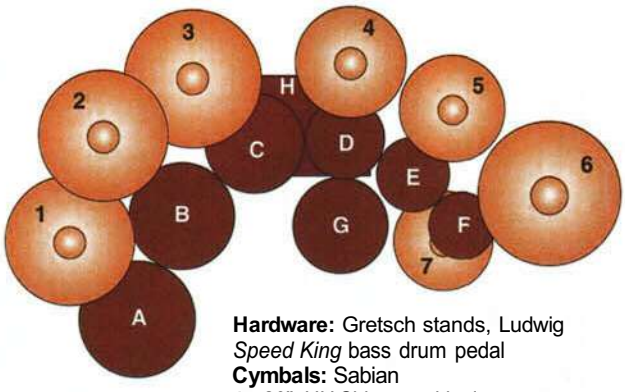
Phil Collins

Q I've been a great admirer of your drumming since I was a youngster. I always attend your concerts when you're in my area, and I always write out your drum parts and play to them. I'd like to know what your Gretsch drumkit setup is, and also what size toms you use (when playing live, standing up) on the song "Lorenzo." Finally, will the Phil Collins Big Band be coming to the US to tour?

Peter Guzzardo
via Internet



A Thank you for the kind words and the support. My drumkit varies a bit according to the musical requirements, but the basic format is diagrammed here. I have two sets of Gretsch toms set up on stage for "Lorenzo": 8", 10", 12", and 15" on one side, and 8", 10", 12", and 13" on the other.

Regarding my big band, I will hopefully be touring in July at selected jazz festivals—but nothing has been confirmed yet.

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Danny Carey

Q I've been a huge fan of yours since I got Tool's *Ænima* Your drumming is incredible! What did you practice to get your feet so strong and smooth? Are there any exercises you can recommend? Who are your favorite bands and/or drummers, past and present? And how do you go about creating some of your amazing polyrhythms?

Spencer Vliet
Northampton, PA

Q I took great interest in what you said in your *MD* cover story about the mechanics of your setup. Many people have told me the "right" way to arrange my instrument, but I still feel that I'm not utilizing its/my full potential (in terms of fluidity, volume, and energy). Could you please explain how you came to utilize your set properly for yourself?

Robert Bane
Tustin, CA

Q I understand that you have a background in marching percussion, along with some "traditional" percussion training. How has that background helped you in your current playing?

Derek Lee
via Internet

A First of all, thanks to everybody for their support and complimentary words' Now, to the answers.

Spencer: I seem to get the best results on double bass by treating my teet the same as my hands. I do dexterity exercises, like playing the twenty-six rudiments, working on simple snare drum solos, and breaking up sticking patterns (like single and double paradiddles) between my feet and my hands.

My favorite bands include Yes, Skinny Puppy, Led Zeppelin, King Crimson, Weather Report, Jethro Tull, Frank Zappa, Kraftwerk, XTC, the Police, Orbital, Laibach, and Yellow Magic Orchestra. My favorite drummers include Paco Sery, Steve Jansen, Terry Bozzio, Barriemore Barlow, Alan White (of Yes), cEVIN Key, Bill Bruford, Zakir Hussain, Lenny White, Martin Atkins, Fish (of Fishbone), Aloke Dutta, Elvin Jones, Kirk Covington, Vinnie Colaiuta, Sim Cain, and Tony Williams.

There are lots of good books on polyrhythms available. If reading gets you down, listen to West African music and interpret the different parts with your different limbs. That should be enough to keep you busy for a while.

Robert: Every so often I tear my kit down to nothing and start from scratch. When I set it up, I do so in order of instrument importance (to me and the music I'm playing). For example, in rock I start with the throne, then the kick, the snare, the hi-hat, etc.—one piece at a time, making sure I'm comfortable with each instrument's position along the way. Take your time and do what really feels good to you, even if it's very unorthodox. If your setup is unique, maybe you'll *play* something unique.

Derek: My marching experience was limited to school bands, where I played snare and tri-toms for eight years. It wasn't really an official drum corps, but the rudimental training did help my hand development a lot. Later, I attended the University of Missouri at Kansas City conservatory of music, where I studied classical and contemporary percussion, along with some jazz. My traditional training on timpani, mallets, and even in classical composition and arranging has come in handy more than one might think in the rock 'n' roll world. I highly recommend it.

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Vintage Drum Challenge

Q The drum shown in the accompanying photo came from a historical old farmhouse in Petit Jean Mountain, Arkansas. It appears to be either a quality toy or a small professional instrument. It's about 6" deep and 9 3/4" in diameter, with wood hoops with metal inlays, a rudimentary strainer on the bottom head, red string-type snares, tension rods with nickel-plated wing nuts and claw hooks, calfskin heads, and a leather carrying strap (which may or may not be original). The shell appears to be mahogany, and has wooden reinforcing rings and a wooden grommet around the airhole. I'd like to see if your drum historian, Harry Cangany, can shed any light on the history and potential value of this drum.

M.C. Blackman
Petit Jean Mt., AR

A We thought this one might be a challenge for Harry, but he rose to the occasion with the following response: "Into the dark, dank archives I went to try to find your drum. My first clue to the maker was the wood grommet on the shell: It looked like Leedy or George B. Stone. A check of various catalogs showed nothing like your drum until I looked through the Rogers 1940 edition. Model *1803* was a 6x12 snare model known as the *Little Parade Snare.* The shell was 'real mahogany,' with hoops in red and with nickel-plated rods and a snare strainer identical to yours. Another juvenile drum shown below the *1803* in the catalog (and designated the *1804*—clever, eh?) had ebony hoops with a nickel band in an inlay channel like those on your drum. The cost of the *1803* was $8.50.

"Ah, but was I through? Knowing that Rogers didn't make many drums back in 1940,I checked catalogs from Gretsch and Slingerland (and a number of other builders from the 1910s and '20s, as well) and found nothing comparable. But in the 1931 Chicago Musical Instruments catalog, a Ludwig *School Drum* is pictured. It has the same look, same strainer, same thumb rods, and same grommet as your drum. The shell was maple and measured 6x12. It listed for $7.00.

"I'm guessing, therefore, that your drum is a Ludwig & Ludwig shell sold through Rogers, with a few cosmetic changes to differentiate it back then and make it damned confusing now. It really is a toy, and I think it has only marginal value. However, based on the time I had to take to find it, I think you ought to ask five grand!"

Zildjian Serial Numbers

Q The last time I visited a music store, I noticed that all the Zildjian cymbals had serial numbers engraved on their surfaces, right at the bottom of the logo. I had never seen that before. Upon my return home I checked my own cymbals—seven Zildjians from various series. None of them have such a number. Is that something to worry about?

Iran Duarte
Asuncion, Paraguay

A Zildjian's product specialist, John King, replies: "In 1994 Zildjian began trademarking all cymbal products with a 'laser etching' method of engraving. This allowed us not only to replicate all of our trademarks perfectly, but also to establish an individual lot number for each cymbal. Cymbals can now be traced back to when they were made and who was involved in each process of manufacturing. This allows us to closely monitor quality issues for all our cymbal products. This state-of-the-art marking system now provides consumers with the ability to maintain an accurate cymbal inventory (which is helpful for insurance purposes), and eliminates the need for us to 'stamp in' the trademark, which could slightly alter the overtones contained in the cymbal."

Virgil Donati CD Source

Q I've heard a lot about Virgil Donati's drum CD, *Stretch.* I'd like to get a copy, but none of the record stores I've checked with can find it. How can I obtain a copy?

Bill Compton
Los Angeles, CA

A Virgil's CD was produced in limited quantity by an Australian production company, which is why it isn't in general distribution in the US. However, you can obtain it directly from Virgil, who is handling sales via his Web site at: www.virgildonati.com.

Studio Buzz

Q I've been enjoying Mark Parson's *MD* articles relating to drum recording and studio situations for years. So I'd like his advice about a problem I'm having. I recently built a recording studio in my home. I'm using incandescent can lights, with rotary-style dimmers that seem to be wreaking havoc on my PA system. The noise made by the dimmers sounds similar to the 60 hz "buzz" found in AC voltage. Items affected include a Tascam dual cassette deck, a Digitech *RP-1,* a Hartke bass amp, and my microphones. Standard items like a CD player and a tape deck are not affected. I know that the lighting and receptacles are wired properly, so faulty grounds would not be the cause of the problem.

What style of lighting and control does Mark use in his own studio? Can he recommend a remedy (such as a filter or dimmer) for my problem? And finally, how does Mark find time to play drums *and* engineer?

jevans
via Internet

A Mark replies: "This is one of those good news/bad news situations. First, the bad news: Forget about using standard solid-state light dimmers (rotary or otherwise) unless you can live with the buzz—which, in a studio, you *can't.* These dimmers work by chopping up the sine wave of the AC power, and they can't help but generate lots of nasty buzz (not even the so-called

'noise-suppressed' models).

"In my current studio I've wired my lights in banks (three in the main room and one in the control room, plus separate track lighting over the console/patch bay area) so that I can vary the lighting depending on the situation. These are all incandescents, by the way; fluorescents will also generate unacceptable levels of electrical noise in your recording equipment.

"Now for the good news: There *is* a way to dim incandescent (or halogen) fixtures without inducing any buzz or hum. The solution is to use variable-power transformers (sometimes called "variacs") instead of solid-state dimmers. Available through electronic parts suppliers such as Mouser ([800] 346-6873), they cost more than standard dimmers—but they're dead quiet in use. (I'll be building a new studio soon, and I'm definitely including them in my wiring plan.) For an overview of how to install variacs in your studio, see the September issue of *Recording* magazine.

"Regarding the drumming/engineering thing: It's a matter of balancing priorities. As a start, consider unplugging your TV. Happy recording!"

To Ride Or Not To Ride

Q I always enjoy seeing the cymbal setups used by various drummers that you feature in your magazine. About 80% of those drummers are rock players, and virtually all of them show a ride cymbal in their setup. I've been to numerous rock concerts lately, where the drummer never used the ride cymbal at all. I recently saw a rerun of "Billy Joel In Yankee Stadium" on cable TV. The camera was on Liberty DeVitto much of the time, and not once in the two-hour program did I see him use a ride cymbal. Why do drummers show a ride cymbal in their setup if they don't play it?

Chuck Ankrom
Carroll, OH

A The flip answer is: "Why have a spare tire on a car when you never intend to use *it*?" But the more serious answer is that drummers' setups reflect their personal taste, their musical preferences, and even just the way they were brought up. Many drummers were trained on kits with ride cymbals, and although their current musical requirements may not call for a ride, they would feel that their kit was incomplete without one. Also, although you may not see rock drummers "riding" a ride cymbal in the classic manner, many will have one just to play the bell for ride patterns or special effects. We've seen others use ride cymbals as monster crashes. (And it's not just rock drummers. Jazz drummers, who generally use lighter-weight cymbals and more minimal setups, often will also "crash" their ride cymbals.)

Ludwig Tivoli Outfits And Seamless Snare Drums

Q I'm looking for any information available about Ludwig *Tivoli Vistalite* drumsets, which featured tiny lights built into the clear drumshells. I'm mainly interested in replacement pieces for the lights, how many sets were produced, and what the last year of production was. I hope you can help me.

Scamp360
via Internet

Q For years, Ludwig has advertised "seamless" metal drumshells. What exactly does this mean? And if it's better than bending and welding the shells, why don't all companies do it?

Larry Green
Parma, OH

A We went to Dick Gerlach—who's been involved with the production of Ludwig drums since the 1960s—for the definitive answer to these questions. Dick responds, "The original *Vistalite* series began in the late 1960s; the *Tivoli Vistalite* outfit was available for a very short time in the mid-'70s, at the very end of *Vistalite* production. We made just under five hundred sets.

"The lights we used are referred to in the marketplace as 'Italian lights.' They're tiny bulbs that come wired in a clear plastic tube, which you can buy in custom-cut lengths from theatrical lighting services or in some lamp stores. You solder the end of the wire up to a live current, and you're in business. We used a transformer to reduce standard 120-volt AC current to a lower voltage as it came to the drumset.

"One of the reasons that I think we didn't sell very many of the *Tivoli* kits is that they 'upstaged' the performers. For instance, Ronnie Tutt had a kit in Las Vegas when he was playing with Elvis, and Elvis asked Ronnie politely if he would go back to his regular covered-wood kit!

"Regarding seamless drumshells, here's how they're made: The shell starts with a large, flat disk of metal. That disk is 'drawn' by a mechanical process into a shape that looks like a can: a cylinder with a closed bottom and an open top. In the next step, that cylinder is spun. Various tools are used to cut away the 'bottom' of the can—leaving a seamless cylinder—and then to form the bearing edges, the center bead, and the snare bed. Then the holes in the shell are punched, not drilled.

"As to why other companies make drums with welded seams rather than drawn, seamless shells, I can only theorize that it's because it costs much more to make a drawn, spun shell than a welded-seam drum. There's a lot more tooling involved, and the operation takes much longer. However, even though I've never seen any seamless shells coming in from any of the offshore manufacturers, I must say that their welding processes are so good—on their more expensive drums—that once the drum is plated, without a trained eye you'd never find a seam. On the inexpensive shells, yes, you can find a seam. What that seam does to the sound of the drum depends on the ear of the person playing it. At Ludwig, we believe that the difference in sound is worth the sizable difference in production cost required to produce a seamless shell."

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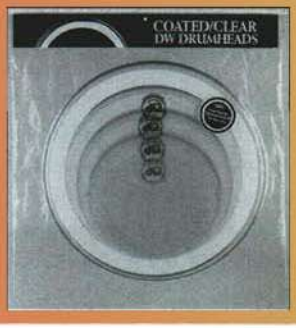
They Came From Out Of The Workshop

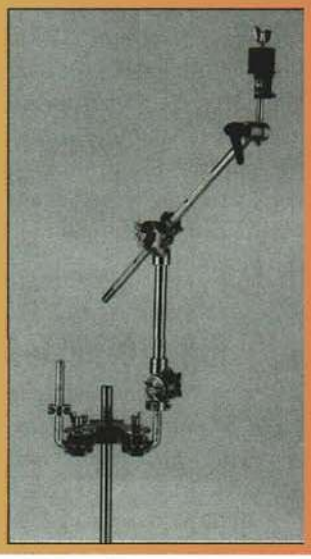
DW Lacquer Color Chart, Craviotto Birch Snare Drum, Add-On Clamps and Arms, and Drumhead Pre-Packs

As if you didn't have enough gorgeous drums to look at on today's market, DW has introduced their Custom, Specialty, and Exotic Lacquer Color Chart. The brochure features photos of shells in all of DW's standard "Custom" solid, transparent, fade, and sunburst lacquer colors, along with a clear plastic sheet that can be laid atop each shell to show how the drum will look with chrome, brass, or black hardware. Also shown are representative samples of DW's "Exotic" and "Specialty" finishes, including birds-eye and brushed options. A kit finished in highly figured, caramel-colored tamo ash is on the cover.

DW's line of Craviotto solid-wood snare drums now includes a 5 1/2x14 birch model. (Some drummers feel that birch provides a slightly more open sound than maple, yet a noticeably brighter sound than oak, cherry, or walnut.) In addition to matching reinforcement hoops, the drum features an oiled finish, a choice of DW (turret-style) or vintage tube-style lugs, and steel or brass-plated die-cast rims.



Add-On clamps and arms from DW provide a versatile system for mounting a variety of drums, cymbals, and accessories from any existing cymbal or drum stand. *Add-Ons* consist of single and double clamps with "ball-in-socket" tom-tom arms (as well as optional interchangeable cymbal, closed hi-hat, and block/bell arms). The assortment of just two clamps and four arms gives drummers increased flexibility in customizing their kits.



Finally, pre-packs of DW's *Coated/Clear* crimped-hoop drumheads are now available in two specially priced assortments: 10", 12", 14", and 16" tom batters, and 12", 13", and 16" tom batters with a 14" *Coated/Controlled* snare batter. Each assortment comes with a free copy of DW's *American Dream II* video.

Drummers Are From Mars...

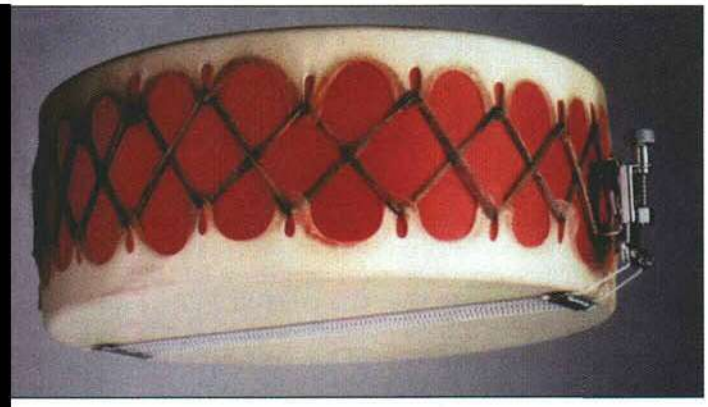
Mapex Mars Pro SE Kit

In a decisive bid to make a splash in the mid-price drumkit market, Mapex has upgraded their *Mars Pro* kit with several new features to create the *Mars Pro SE.* Based on the *Mars* series' original 9-ply shell (mahogany core, inner and outer plies of maple), the new model is said to offer a "full-bodied, natural wood sound." It includes tube-style lugs, *ITS* (Isolated Tom System) tom and bass-drum mounts, Remo *Unicorn* drumheads, matching wood snare drums and wood bass drum counterhoops, upgraded 550 series double-braced hardware, a 560 chain-drive bass drum pedal, and a choice of six transparent lacquer or wax cherry red finishes. Four-, five-, and six-piece packages (along with individual sizes for custom configurations and add-ons are available), and a limited lifetime warranty on the shells is standard.

You Say You Really Want The Sound Of Calf?

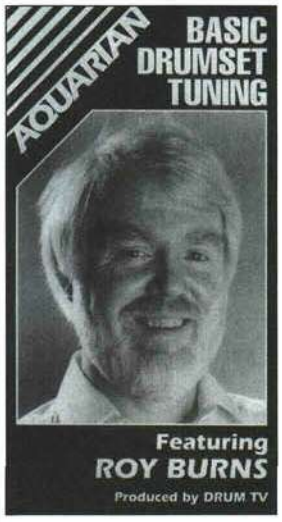
Taos Native American Snare Drum

Combining modern snare drum technology with historic Native American-style drum construction, Taos Drums offers their *Native American Snare.* Recently improved with beveled edges and a lighter Ludwig *P-S0* throwoff, the snare is said to have a rich timbre and a "distinct, almost palpable feel." Available in all standard sizes, 12" and 14" piccolo models, and 5x10 and 7x10 specialty sizes, the drums feature heads of split cowhide and yellow, red. or green hand-painted shells.



The Wit And Wisdom Of Rov Burns

Aquarian Basic Drumset Tuning Video



Drummer/clinician/manufacturer Roy Burns' *Concepts* column was one of the longest-running and most popular in *Modern Drummer* s history. Now you can have a little bit of Roy's expertise for your very own, on Aquarian's *Basic Drumset Tuning* video. In it, Roy shares "a lifetime of experience," including simple, easy ways to get your drums to sound good. He also demonstrates ways to improve your buzz roll, brush playing, and hand technique, along with conducting a "factory tour" of the Aquarian drumhead facility. An added feature is Roy's drum solo, performed at MD's Tenth Anniversary Festival Weekend. The video is available at Aquarian dealers for a limited time.

Quick Stick Picks From Vic

Vic Firth American Classic Fusion, Alex Acuna Kit, and Corpsmaster Indoor Drumsticks, Mike Mainieri Keyboard Mallet, and Corpsmaster Timpani Mallets

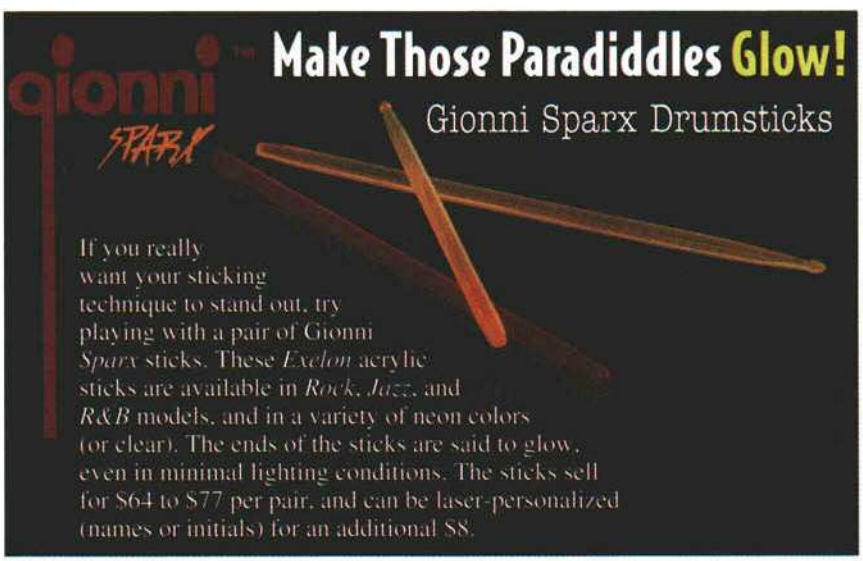
Whether you do your percussive playing indoors or outdoors, on a drum, a timpani, or a set of vibes, Vic Firth has something new for you. For kit drummers, the *American Classic Fusion* stick, in hickory, features a short taper and a medium round wood tip "for warmth and brilliance on cymbals." It's 16 3/16" long and .580" in diameter, and priced at $10.75.

The *Alex Acuna Kit Stick* features a long shoulder taper with a reverse taper at the neck for "fast cymbal response and excellent feel." Its blunt-nosed barrel tip provides "a broad and deep cymbal sound." The hickory stick is 16 3/8" long and .545" in diameter, and is priced at $12.25.

The *Mike Mainieri Signature* vibe mallet has a dense, mushroom-shaped core wrapped in cotton cord to deliver extra weight on the bars, thus "enhancing the fundamental tone of the vibraphone and producing a bold, full-bodied sound." The mallets feature premium rattan shafts and medium-hard heads. They're 15 3/4" long and priced at $53 per pair.

The *Corpsmaster Indoor Marching Snare Stick* was developed in conjunction with percussion specialist Brian Mason (Phantom Regiment, Cavaliers). The stick is slightly shorter and thinner than standard outdoor marching sticks to produce the lower volume levels and more clearly defined highs required for indoor marching applications. Crafted in hickory at 16 1/2" long and .680" in diameter, it's available at $11.75 per pair in wood tip, $12.75 in nylon tip.

Finally, new *Corpsmaster* timpani mallets have straight, non-tapered maple shafts, putting more weight forward toward the mallet head to produce more sound with less effort. The enhanced weight is also said to produce lower fundamentals from the timpani head. The line consists of four models (general, legato, staccato, and ultra-staccato), all 16½" long, .590" in diameter, and priced at $38 per pair.


gionni
SPARX
Make Those Paradiddles Glow!
Gionni Sparx Drumsticks
If you really want your sticking technique to stand out, try playing with a pair of Gionni Sparx sticks. These Exelon acrylic sticks are available in Rock, Jazz, and R&B models, and in a variety of neon colors (or clear). The ends of the sticks are said to glow, even in minimal lighting conditions. The sticks sell for $64 to $77 per pair, and can be laser-personalized (names or initials) for an additional $8.

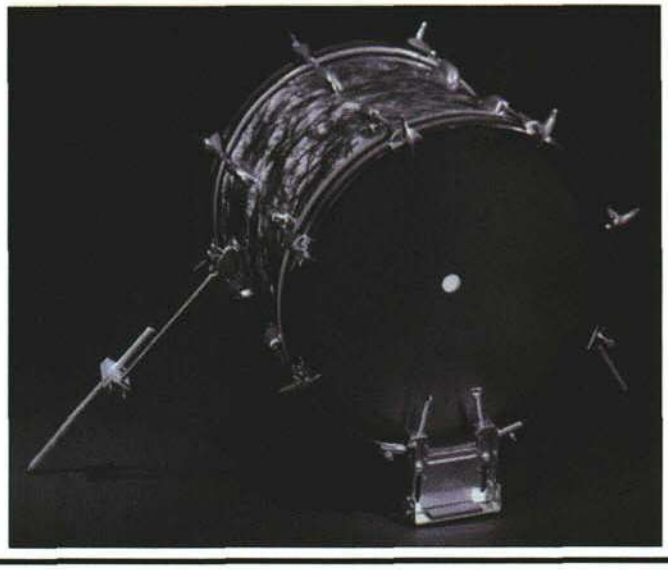
Bass Drum Need A Lift?

D'Amico Adjustable Bass Drum Cradle And RSA Music Enterprises Kickit Adjustable Bass Drum Lift

It's unusual for two separate companies to simultaneously introduce a product that addresses the same problem, but that's the case with the D'Amico *Adjustable Bass Drum Cradle* and the RSA Music Enterprises *Kickit Adjustable Bass Drum Lift.* Both are designed to raise a small-diameter bass drum off the floor so that a bass drum beater can strike the drum's batter head at its center. Raising and striking a small bass drum in this manner is said to produce a stronger fundamental pitch and greater volume from the drum.

The D'Amico *Cradle* adjusts to fit any drum from 14" to 18" in depth and from 16" to 20" in diameter. This allows a 16" floor tom to be instantly converted to a bass drum, if desired. The pedal mounts to an adjustable T-bar attached to the cradle. The drum is stabilized in the *Cradle* with rubber feet that adjust to fit the diameter of the drum. The unit is available from D'Amico for $189.95.

The RSA *Kickit* combines extensions for a bass drum's spurs with a lift bracket that both supports the drum at its rear and provides a site for attaching the pedal. This system can accommodate drums ranging from 16" to 22" in diameter, and can be packed up with a drummer's other stands in a typical hardware case or bag. The Kickit bracket retails at $90; the universal legs retail at $68 a pair.

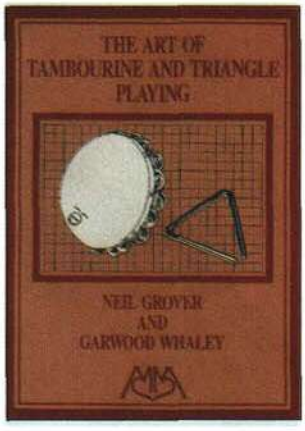


And What's More

Spaun Drum Company is now offering bell brass snare drums. Each shell is constructed from 1/8"-thick bell brass, and is highly polished and coated with a baked-on polyurethane coating. Sizes offered are 10", 12", 13", and 14" diameters, from 4" to 7" depths. Brass-plated or black powder-coated 2.3 mm triple-flanged hoops are standard on each drum. Retail price is $995 for any size.

MagStar is offering a new series of 12", 13", and 14" snare drums in 4" to 8" depths, with shells composed of poplar, birch, and maple. Outer-face plies can be of several woods, including mahogany burl (as shown), cherry, jarrah, and walnut. The sound is said to be well-rounded, with a "meatier" tone and response than an all-maple shell. Drums can be fitted with brass or nickel tube lugs, or with standard cast lugs, and finished in hand-rubbed natural oil, stains, or orange shellac (as shown).

Anyone interested in the nuances and methodology of playing the tambourine and triangle *seriously* should check out *The Art Of Tambourine And Triangle Playing,* by top classical percussionists Neil Graver and Garwood Whaley. It's new from Meredith Music Publications.



Working The Inner Clock For Drumset, a previously independent book/cassette release by Phil Maturano (reviewed in the July '94 MD) is now available from Hal Leonard Publications.The reissue is now a book/CD package.

Remo Correction:

Recent press materials regarding the Remo *Pro Pack* drumhead promotion incorrectly stated that the *Highlights Of The Modern Drummer Festival Weekend* CD was included in the package at no additional charge. Unfortunately, due to higher-than-anticipated production costs, a nominal charge of $2 for the CD has been added to its overall dealer cost, which may or may not be passed on the end user.

Sher Music Company

is offering the *Yellowjackets Songbook.* It's a collection of individual instrumental parts—including drum charts—for twenty of the group's most popular tunes. Each instrument has its own spiral-bound chart book, and the entire collection is presented in a three-ring binder.

Making Contact

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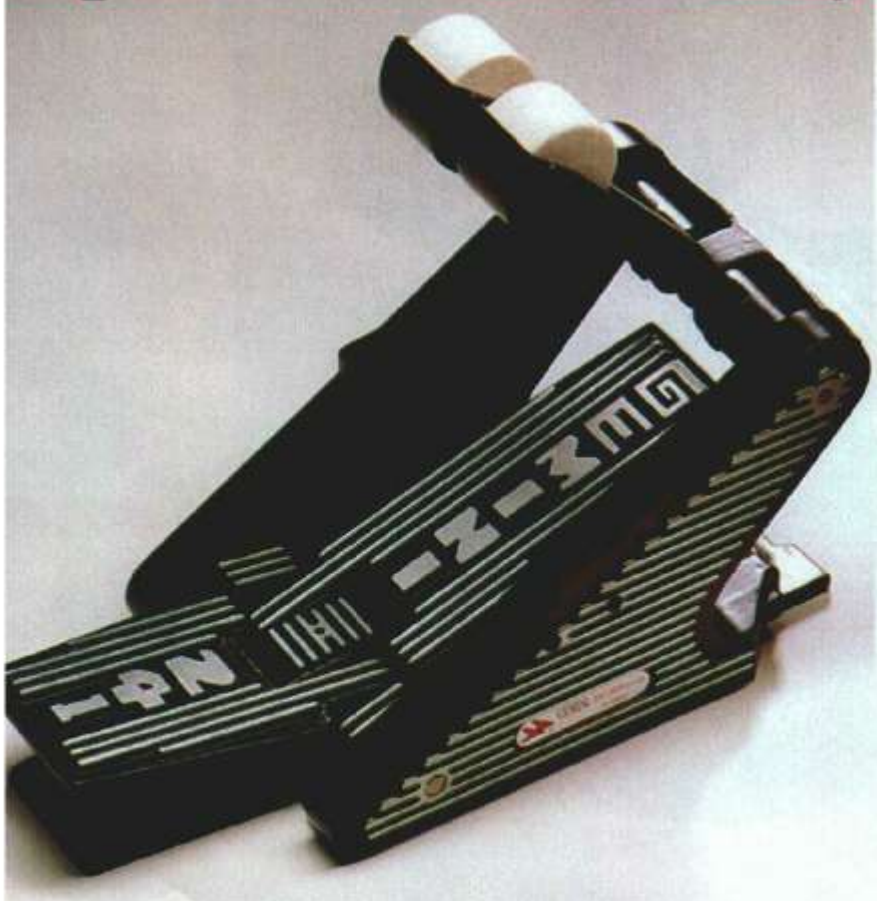

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Tama Starclassic Performer Drumkit

by Rick Van Horn

This stunning beauty doesn't look "mid-priced."

Tama's *Starclassic Performer* kit offers a combination of elements: aesthetics and many functional features identical to the more expensive *Starclassic Maple* series, but with less-expensive shells and hardware for affordability. It's designed to be a kit that any pro could use with satisfaction and pride, and that any student or weekender could aspire to.

The current *Performer* series is actually the second generation of its name. It was originally introduced a couple of years ago with different shells, a metal snare drum, and composite-material bass drum hoops. In a bold move by Tama, the series was upgraded last year with higher-quality shells, a matching-finish wood snare drum, and matching wood bass drum hoops—all at no increase in price.

Our test model consisted of a standard five-piece package, including 10x12 and 11x13 rack toms, a 16x16 floor tom, a 16x22 bass drum, and a matching wood 5½xl4 snare drum. Toms and snare drums are of 8-ply construction, 6 mm thick; bass drums are 9-ply and 7 mm thick. The inner and outer plies are birch; the in-

Jim Esposito

WHAT'S HOT

- stunning appearance belies "mid-price" status
- innovative and wonderfully functional tom mount
- quality drumheads as original equipment

WHAT'S NOT

- bass drum pedal not up to the standard of the rest of the kit
- bass drum sound may be too "controlled" for some tastes

between plies are Japanese basswood. The kit came with an accompanying hardware package that I'll detail later.

Appearance

The *look* of the *Performer* kit is one of its greatest assets: It's just plain gorgeous. The use of a birch ply on the outside of the shell allows for a beautiful natural-wood finish, with the grain clearly visible. Our test kit was stained in a walnut finish: a deep red color that looked rich and vibrant. The birch ply on the inside of each shell is sanded smooth; although I'm sure some sort of sealer is used, you'd never see or feel it. The effect is that of very smooth, dry, bare wood.

The small, rounded *Starclassic* lugs are attractive in and of themselves, and provide the added benefit of letting lots of the shell surface show. Matching wood bass drum hoops and small claws with recessed key rods enhance this effect. Finally, the somewhat "old-fashioned" logo badges on the drums add a "classic"—and classy—touch, totally in keeping with the concept of the drums.

All of the memory clamps used on the kit (rack-tom mounts and floor-tom legs) are designed to meld with their corresponding holding brackets. This creates the look of a single assembly (as opposed to looking like a bracket with an obvious collar sitting above or below it). It's a very nice combination of aesthetics and functionality.

Hardware

To help keep the overall cost of the *Performer* series down, it comes supplied with medium-duty hardware. The legs on the snare and hi-hat stands are single-braced—which I personally feel is more than adequate for almost any playing application. After all, the playing stress on those two stands is absolutely vertical, so you're not likely to tip them over. Why carry around heavier double-braced stands if they aren't necessary?

On the other hand, a cymbal stand often needs to withstand almost sideways impact—especially when crash cymbals are placed up high. Accordingly, the cymbal stand's legs are double-braced for additional stability. But it still utilizes medium-sized tubing, so it's not *too* massive. Very practical.

Although the test kit shown in our photo did not include a second cymbal stand (which I believe is a basic requirement of any drumkit), this proved to be a shipping error. In fact, the hardware package available with our test kit includes a double-braced *boom* stand. Nice.

The hi-hat features an easy-to-use rotating stair-step spring adjustment, a rotating tripod for convenient positioning around double pedals, and a captured felt-and-washer tiller assembly that can't come off during packup. It's really quite a little gem. And even the clutch has a feature that I haven't seen before. The felt washers were so tight on the clutch that they actually had to be threaded on and off—adding additional security against the top cymbal working loose during playing. I have no doubt that these felts would become looser over time, but I still think it's a nice touch to start out with.

I don't think you could ask for more adjustability than is provided by the *Performer's, MTH900* double tom mount. It's a ball-and-socket L-arm type, but with a major difference from others of this ilk. One of the L-arm assemblies is held by a separate post within the mount, allowing it to swing in an eccentric horizontal arc, and also to be elevated separately from the other L-arm. This provides a wider side-to-side, range than most double tom mounts of this type can manage, while also allowing you to put one of the drums at a totally different level, should you choose to do so. (And just

for an added bonus, you could remove the tom mount entirely and replace it with a cymbal arm. Can you say "flexibility"?)

This leads us to the *Star-Cast* mounting system for the rack toms. It's a suspension system that utilizes extra holes in the die-cast drum rims to accommodate bolts attached to external surrounding mounting brackets. The bolts are isolated from the brackets by rubber fittings. Thus the drums are suspended by their rims, rather than being held by anything attached to the shells.

We'll discuss the acoustic potential of this system later. But in terms of function, I was impressed at how stable this system was. I deliberately laid into the rack toms to see if I could get them to bounce—to no avail. They were as solid as if they were secured by any shell mount on the market. And the surrounding brackets were close enough to the edges of each rack tom to permit very close positioning of the two drums. About the only downside of this system that I could ascertain was that in order to change a drumhead, one must either remove a drum from its bracket (which is easy enough to do with the rubber-covered *Star-Cast* mounting bolts), or remove the drum *and* bracket from its stand. (In the latter case, the rim-and-bracket assembly stays intact, which is more convenient than some other drum-suspension assemblies.)

In a particularly helpful gesture, Tama has designed all of the mounting brackets on this kit to be "captured-bolt" types. That is, when you loosen the wingnut, it's held in place; it cannot swing away and completely open up the bracket. If you've ever tried to place a heavy rack tom on its mounting post with one hand, while trying to hold the bracket closed *and* tighten the bolt at the same time with the other hand, you'll understand why I appreciate this feature.

Equally nice are the bass drum spurs, which are in two separate sections. The upper section is a fairly large "track," into which an extension rod has been fitted. This is the section that rotates for set-up or pack-up. The extension rod is what you use to get your height adjustment—and Tama has thoughtfully provided a locking device *and* position-indicator "notches" to help you find and/or keep the same position for each setup. I didn't find it necessary to retract the rod for packup, so once I set the legs they'd probably just stay there. But others may choose to retract the legs, depending on how the drum fit in their cases or bags. It's nice to know that the option to do so is there, with no danger of losing your favorite spur position.

The snare strainer was quite clean-looking and attractive, with rubber covers over the snare-tension knob and the knob at the end of the throw-off lever. However, when the snares are in the "on" position those two knobs are virtually touching each other, making fine snare-tension adjustments very awkward to accomplish. I'd like to see just a bit of clearance between these two knobs.

The only part of the *Performer* hardware package that leans more toward the "budget" side of things than I'd like is the *HP20* bass drum pedal. It's a single-chain-drive model, with a circular *Rolling Glide* sprocket. It features a basic bent support rod beneath the footboard, and on our test model that rod had a tendency to come out of its holes on either side of the yoke. As a result, I just didn't feel very confident about the solidity of this pedal—as it came out of the box. (After I bent the rods out a bit to get more "spread" at the yoke connection, things improved.) The action of the pedal was acceptable, but more than a little noisy.

I'm very familiar with Tama's "next-step-up" pedal—the *HP80D Iron Cobra.* It's similar to the *HP20,* with the addition of a solid baseplate, an adjustable-weight beater, and a few other minor features that give it performance characteristics that I think would be more in keeping with the overall quality level of the rest of the *Performer* kit.

When I mentioned my opinion to Tama's Paul Specht, suggesting that the *HP80* pedal should be standard issue for the *Performer* series, he explained that in order to achieve all the upgrades made to the series and still keep it at its original price point, some economy measures had to be taken. Pedal selection was one of them. He stressed that a buyer could order the kit with the higher-quality pedal at minimal extra cost.

Sound

Tama says that the Japanese basswood used in *Performer* shells "has a sound completely different from maple or birch: very loud, open, and powerful (but not overwhelming)." They also state that basswood's "tonal power is very well balanced, thanks to a clear sustain and mellow attack."

Over the years, I've discovered that head selection can make or break the sound of a drumkit—no matter what its wood type or how expensive it is. Even "mid-priced" kits often suffer from the installation of poor-quality drumheads as a cost-cutting measure.

Not so, however, with the *Starclassic Performer* kit. The toms are fitted with clear Evans *G1* single-ply batter heads and Tama *Hazy 200* resonator heads. The bass drum features an Evans *EQ1* batter and a Tama black logo front head. Both heads are fitted with muffling rings; the batter also features tiny vent holes around its perimeter to allow air to escape without reducing the depth or resonance of the drum. The snare batter is an Evans white coated *Uno 58.* These are all professional-quality heads, which I assume were chosen by Tama to complement the inherent qualities of the basswood/birch shells.

The choice is a good one as far as the toms go. The *Gl* clear, single-ply heads provide excellent sustain—maximizing that "open and powerful" quality. Their attack sound is not muffled (as can happen with some twin-ply heads), nor do they sound "plastic-y," as some coated heads can. These qualities add an acoustic balance to the "mellow attack" provided by the shells, resulting in a very clear, pure tonality. I was able to get a fairly wide tuning range, although the heads had to be tuned down to the point of near-looseness to get a really meaty low-end, and they tended to sound a little choked if I brought them up to a really high pitch.

I'm not so sure about Tama's choice of heads for the bass drum. The *EQ1* single-ply batter head produced a lot of punch and a very sharp attack, but not a lot of low end. Its muffling properties effectively controlled any drumhead overring. The muffled front head added even more overring control—perhaps *too* much. Considering that there was nothing in the drum and no hole in the front head, I expected it to produce a big, deep sound. Instead, it sounded a bit flat and contained—as though there were more sound in there, trying to get out.

Thinking there was too much muffling on the batter head (and that a twin-ply head might produce more bottom), I tried swapping the muffled, single-ply Evans *EQ1* batter for a significantly *less* muffled, twin-ply Remo *Pinstripe.* Although I got more drumhead ring, I didn't really get more depth of pitch or much more overall resonance out of the drum. That led me to think that the muffled *front* head might be the culprit, so I put the original batter head back on and swapped the front head for a single-ply black *Attack* model with a 4" hole at about the "five o' clock" position. I figured that removing the front head's muffling *and* adding a vent hole would "open up" the sound of the drum. It did...but not nearly as much as I thought it would. The drum still stressed the punch and attack, without the underlying body I was seeking.

So I went to a clear *Ambassador* front head: no muffling, no hole. This produced a satisfying increase in overall resonance—though, surprisingly, more from *behind* the drum'than from in front! But there was still no more appreciable low end than before.

It wasn't until I began working with the *snare* drum that I began to see a pattern. It was the standout drum of the kit, with a marvelously crisp, dry, woody sound, terrific snare sensitivity, *lots* of high-end and projection, and surprisingly little need for muffling.

The performance of the snare, the tuning sensitivities of the toms, and the problems I had with the bass drum all led me to believe that the *Starclassic Performer's* birch/basswood shells have a natural tendency to reproduce high frequencies more than low ones. They also seem to have a natural "dryness"—which explains the "powerful...(but not overwhelming)" part of Tama's description. I agree with the "clear sustain" description as far as the toms and snare drum go (which was helped, I'm sure, by the die-cast rims on those drums), but I disagree with "mellow attack." Attack was one of the major elements of our test kit's sound—on all the drums, but most especially on the bass drum.

I'd define the overall sound of the kit—especially when fitted with the factory-installed bass drum heads—as powerful and punchy, with good tom sustain, crisp snare projection, and a sharp and cutting—but controlled—bass drum (which, I hasten to say, many drummers would find an absolute blessing.)

Conclusions And Pricing

The *Starclassic Performer* series is available in several drumkit/hardware configurations. Our test kit was what you might call the "beginning of the line": a five-piece kit, equipped with the most basic hardware package available. It lists for $2,499. As far as I'm concerned, given the excellent quality of construction, the terrific hardware amenities (tom mount, memory locks, nifty hi-hat, etc.), the absolutely gorgeous, classy *look* of the kit, and the punchy and powerful (if controlled) sound, the *Performer* should be a major consideration for drummers looking for the "next step" (or two!) in drumkit quality.

Bosphorus Cymbals

by William F. Miller

Old-world craftsmanship and an "enchanted formula" make these eerie and exotic new cymbals a true Turkish Delight.

WHAT'S HOT

- very exotic sounds throughout the line
- 18" flat ride has a beautifully controlled sound yet has more presence than expected
- 22" ride may be the lowest-pitched ride cymbal on the planet

WHAT'S NOT

- a few of these models are so unusual-sounding that they may be a bit too "out" for some players' tastes

Bosphorus is a recent entry into the highly competitive world of cymbal manufacturing. But this young upstart may have the right idea for competing in what is truly a crowded marketplace; Bosphorus is creating cymbals that are just a bit different from what's currently available.

Calling Bosphorus a young company is a bit misleading, in that the men who create the cymbals are actually veteran artisans. Hasan Seker, Hasan Ozdemir, and Ibrahim Yakici are the cymbal-smiths who create *all* of the product for Bosphorus. These three

From left: 18" *Turk Flat Ride,* 20" *Extra Heavy,* 22" *Ancient Turk,* 20" Master Series, 18" *Golden Horn*

men toil in rather spartan conditions at their facility in Istanbul, Turkey, handling all aspects of cymbal production including the vital hammering of the metal. This old-world, hands-on approach ensures that no two Bosphorus cymbals sound alike.

In general, just what *do* these cymbals sound like? The company recently sent a few different models for us to check out. After spending a little time with these instruments, it's clear that something special, a bit unique, and maybe even a bit odd is going on here. And for some people, odd is very good.

Very Splashy

Let's begin with the smallest cymbals Bosphorus sent, the splashes, which are from the company's *Traditional Series.* In general, these three splashes—8", 10", and 12"—are very thin and 'dark-sounding for their size, and create almost oriental-like effects. They're all ultra fast and light, especially the 8", which speaks barely above a whisper. The 10", in particular, creates an exotic China sound. And the 12" is just a tad gongy, offering a different timbre in a splash cymbal. If you're looking to add a quick color to your cymbal arsenal, these little beauties could quite possibly do the trick. The 8" sells for $69, the 10" for $75, and the 12" for$110.

An Odd Hat, Indeed

The three pairs of hi-hats sent from Bosphorus really start to show the unique tack the company is taking. They sent a pair of 13"s from their *Master Series,* which, according to their literature, is the company's most general-purpose line. I'll say this: These hats had a lot of personality for a "basic" line. They featured an ultra-thin top cymbal matched with a medium-weight bottom, the combination producing a clear and cutting "chick" and a clean stick sound. However, playing the hats slightly opened brought out a deeper effect that was nice and grungy. And splashing the two cymbals together produced a dark and exotic tone. These hats aren't too loud, so they would work perfectly in a small-group jazz context, especially if you are looking for something with a bit of personality. The 13"s sell for $225. (Also included for review was a pair of 14" *Master Series* hi-hats, which were somewhat similar to the 13"s but with a bit more presence. Excellent general purpose hats. The 14"s sell for $275.)

Now for the strangest pair of hats you'll ever hear. The *China Hi-Hats,* available in 15" only, is a *bizarre* instrument. The bottom cymbal is standard hi-hat fare, fairly thick and heavy. The top cymbal, though, is a whole 'nother animal. The shape is similar to a China cymbal, yet with an extra flange so that the top cymbal has an edge that can meet up with the bottom cymbal. As for the sound of these bad boys, well, they are *out.* The chick sound is more like a "crunch," the splash sound is pure dirt, and the stick sound? Well, first of all, it's hard to *get* one because of the odd shape of the top cymbal. Let's just say the stick sound is a bit "tanky."

While the splash and chick sound could be a bit unwieldy, playing the hats with sticks actually sounded very interesting mounted in a closed position. I placed them on an *X-Hat* on the right side of

my kit as a secondary pair of hats, and they provided a funky, trash-can lid ride sound completely different from my normal hi-hats. This actually worked great in a band context, especially when playing patterns between my regular hats and the *China Hi-Hats.* The trashy sound they produced was somewhat reminiscent of the type of white noise Terry Bozzio likes to get from his stacked cymbals, but without as much volume or cut. They're weird, but they're also kind of cool. The *China Hi-Hats* sell for $285.

Top: 18" *Traditional crash.* Middle: 14" *Rock* and 16" *Dark* crashes. Bottom: 12", 10", and 8" splashes

Time To Crash

The crash cymbals Bosphorus sent also had that touch of "dirt" to their sound, an earthy, slightly trashy effect that is, again, just a little different from other crashes available today. The 14" *Rock* crash, from Bosphorus's *Traditional Series,* was low-pitched compared to standard 14" rock cymbals. The sound here was slightly gongy yet with enough sibilance to give it a satisfying sound. The 14" *Rock* sells for $125. (Bosphorus also sent a 16" *Dark* crash, which was low-pitched and smooth-sounding with a good amount of sustain. It sells for $149.)

An 18" crash, also from their *Traditional Series,* was an excellent-sounding cymbal, especially if you favor dark and controlled explosions. It also had a relatively quick decay with a full-crash effect. The 18" *Traditional Series* crash sells for $175.

A Warm Blanket

While all of the Bosphorus cymbals sent for review sounded good, the ride cymbals were far and away the most impressive of the lot. Each of the rides had personality, and most had a deep, rich quality that made them inspiring to play. (The exception was their 20" *Extra Heavy* ride, which had a clear stick sound and a piercing bell. It sells for $239.)

Clockwise from top: 15" *China Hi-hats,* 13" *Master Series* hats, 14" *Regular* hats.

The 18" ride from the company's *Golden Horn* series was impressive. (The *Golden Horn* line has a unique appearance: The top features concentric circles of lathed and unlathed sections.) This cymbal had a dark and pleasing ride sound, with an even spread. Smacking the cymbal with the shaft of the stick brought out a funky crash sound that would speak nicely above a band, and the bell sound was certainly usable. An excellent crash/ride cymbal. The *Golden Horn* 18" sells for $185.

Now for my favorite of the bunch: The 18" flat ride, from Bosphorus's *Turk* line (unlathed, extra-hammered top), was an exceptional cymbal. It had a dark (surprise!) and controlled sound, not strange for a cymbal without a bell. But it also had more presence than would be expected from a flat cymbal. This was the first flat ride I've played that would actually work in a louder setting—that's how much presence, tone, and spread it had. I used the cymbal on a couple of gigs with a six-piece band, and it found a nice spot in the music in a full and warm way. (And even the bass player mentioned he liked its sound!) Certainly worth checking out if you're looking for a more versatile flat ride. It sells for $185.

The prettiest-sounding cymbal Bosphorus sent was a 20" ride from their *Master Series.* This one is a jazz drummer's dream. It produced a smoky, soft, and dark mood that spread out like a warm blanket. Slow-to-medium-tempo ride work would be perfect on this one, although even uptempo articulation was fairly clear here. And as for the tone of this cymbal, there wasn't a harsh note to be found on it. *Not* surprisingly, though, was that the bell sound was not all that usable. However, this ride cymbal was a pleasure to swing on. It sells for $249.

The largest cymbal sent from Bosphorus was a 22" ride from their *Ancient Turk* line. Do you remember years ago when drum-

mers talked about burying their cymbals in the backyard to prematurely age them? (It didn't really "age" the cymbals, it just got them dirty!) Well, cymbals from the *Ancient Turk* line *look* like they've been underground for a while. They are lathed and hammered, but there's an unfinished, dirty quality to them. (They even *feel* a little gritty to the touch.) How does all this affect the sound? Well, this 22" was one of the lowest-pitched ride cymbals I've ever heard. The stick sound was clear, but the tone was very dark—practically *dank*—and the spread was big and a bit wobbly. The bell sound was odd to boot. Let's just say this one had a strange personality that only the most adventurous of drummers would want to tackle. The 22" *Ancient Turk* sells for $329.

Jim Esposito

The uniquely shaped *China Hi-hats*

In The (Cymbal) Bag

After spending some time with these cymbals, there's no question in my mind that Bosphorus produces high-quality instruments. Jazz drummers in particular might enjoy exploring the sonic depths of these metals. And the fact that Bosphorus caters to slightly different tastes is a good thing. After all, we don't all want to sound the same, do we?

For more info on Bosphorus in the US, contact Essex USA, 5950 Live Oak Pkwy #280, Norcross, GA 30093, tel: (770) 662-3002, fax:(770)447-1036.

Noble & Cooley Alloy Classic Snare Drum

by Rick Mattingly

Can a snare drum be dry and resonant at the same time? Read on!

WHAT'S HOT

- **alloy shell produces "ring" that complements the natural frequency of the drum for dry and resonant response**
- **die-cast rims produce a bright, powerful sound, but are gentle on drumsticks**
- **size and acoustic performance make the drum very versatile**

I'm not sure what's "classic" about an alloy, but the sound of Noble & Cooley's *Alloy Classic* snare drum certainly justifies its surname. The drum has a dry, full-bodied sound—reminiscent of quality, vintage wood-shell snare drums—and produces an especially rich timbre.

Whereas some drums sound dry because they lack ring (and, therefore, can potentially also lack projection), the *Alloy Classic* has plenty of resonance. The difference is in the pitch of the ringing it produces. With most metal drums, that pitch is quite a bit higher than the fundamental pitch of the drum itself, making the ring more obvious (and potentially objectionable). But with the *Alloy Classic,* the ring blends in with the overtones of the drum, giving the sound a drier, more focused timbre without robbing it of projection. I tend to be pretty quick about throwing a *Zero-Ring* over a batter head to get rid of excess ring, but that didn't seem as necessary with this drum. As a result, the sound was more alive without sounding overly ringy.

The drum measures 4 3/4xl4, which gives it a wide degree of versatility. It can be cranked pretty tight to approximate a piccolo snare drum, but it also sounds good when tuned low. When tuned in the middle of its range the drum had a slightly dark sound (in the good sense of the term), producing fat backbeats that would reinforce a band's sound more than slice through it. Jazz drummers would find this drum a nice complement to dark ride cymbals of the "old *K"* style.

Rick Mattingly

Dark-sounding cymbals tend to be thinner than high-pitched ones. So, given the *Alloy Classic's* dark, warm sound, it should come as no surprise that it has a very thin shell. That shell is made from high-grade aluminum, by a method called "vacuum process sand casting." It is then hard-coat anodized, after which a high-tech finish is applied to produce consistent coloring. The shell has some visual texture, but is smooth to the touch, and its matte finish does not show fingerprints.

The drum's ten lugs, snare strainer, and snare butt are

made of solid brass; the hoops are die-cast. All are powder-coated for a glossy black finish. The top of the rim was especially nice for rimshots, producing a bright, powerful sound. The smoothness of the rim's countour seemed to be gentler on drumsticks.

There is a single vent hole, which is cleverly hidden behind the strainer in a non-vibrational position on the shell. The drum came fitted with an Evans *Genera G1* coated batter head and an Evans *Snare Side 300 Hazy* snare head. Snares were Noble & Cooley's *Cam-Action* model, which have ridges designed to accept the snare cord so that the unit will lay flat against the head. Accordingly, snare response was excellent right to the edge of the head. Set at medium tensioning, the snares responded well to extremely soft buzz rolls but didn't sound choked when loud backbeats were played.

As one has come to expect from Noble & Cooley, the *Alloy Classic* is well-designed and good-looking. And because it's made from metal, one can expect consistency from drum to drum, as well as perfect bearing edges for accurate tuning. But it's definitely *not* just another version of what's already out there.

Let's face it: All the major manufacturers know how to build solid snare drums that do what they're supposed to do. But many of those drums sound the same, and while there's nothing wrong with them, they ultimately lack the distinguishing features necessary to achieve character in their sound. What really justifies the *Alloy Classic's* existence is its warm, dark personality. It truly deserves the name "classic." List price is $800.

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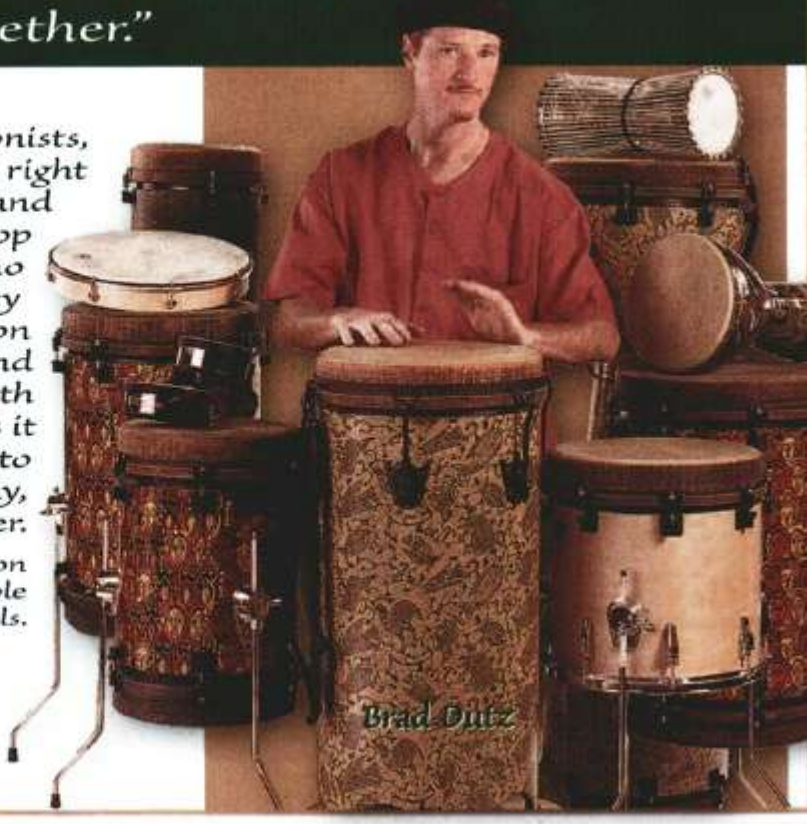

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Stephen Perkins,
Jane's Addiction

Joey Heredia,
Independent

Gerald Heyward's DW Hardware set-up includes: 9799 (x3) double cymbal, 9934 (x4) double tom and cymbal, 9500 snare drum and 5500TH hi-hat stands, 9100 throne and 934 accessory cymbal arm.

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Dave Weckl

by Rick Mattingly

Photos by Alex Solca

Dave Weckl was mad. "I called Freddie Gruber and I was practically yelling at him," Weckl says. "I felt like everyone had been keeping something from me for all these years.

"But I wasn't mad at Freddie," Weckl is quick to add. "I was just angry and frustrated that I hadn't studied with him sooner and found out that there is another way to play the drums. When I started applying what he had shown me, I was astounded at how easy it was to play all of a sudden, and at the power and sound that was coming out. I felt like a kid again, having discovered something that I had been missing. For all those years I had been playing drums from an athletic approach, working way too hard and gripping the sticks too tight. Because I practiced so much I could pull stuff off and still make it musical. But after twenty-six years of playing I had suddenly found a completely different way to play. I literally jumped up from behind the set in excitement and called him.

New & Improved

"Freddie told me that it wasn't like I couldn't play before this," Weckl says. "If you work at something hard enough and long enough, you're going to develop some ability. This is just a different approach. I've gotten slammed in the press and even among my peers for quite a while about being overly technical and, to a point, non-feeling. In some respects, I can look back now and agree. Not totally, because I think some people use the whole 'I don't need technique' thing as an excuse to not work at their craft. But in a big way I can feel a difference in my drumming and in my enjoyment of playing music."

The proof is in the hearing. On the recent *Dave Grusin Presents West Side Story* album on the N2K Encoded Music label, Weckl's sticks seem to dance over his drums and cymbals, and his drumming drives the music more through energy than through sheer power. And on his new Stretch/Concord solo album, *Rhythm Of The Soul,* Weckl's drumming has a looseness unlike anything heard on his previous solo outings. A lot of the grooves are pure R&B, but the spirit is more R&J—rhythm & joy.

You can see the difference, too. In the past, the pyrotechnics and power of Weckl's drumming didn't seem to match his clinical and controlled physical movements. Even his facial expressions tended to be those of someone who was "working" the drums rather than playing them. Now, the sound and the look go together. Both are relaxed and flowing, and Dave looks and sounds as if he's enjoying himself.

That's not to suggest that Weckl's drumming is any less awe-inspiring than before. If anything, the licks are even faster. But somehow it's all more listener-friendly because it's more human, more musical, and more fun.

The road that led Weckl to that destination began with Buddy Rich. "He was the common denominator between Freddie and me," Weckl explains. "Freddie can be kind of difficult to nail down on specifics, because he will talk in a 'cosmic' fashion, relating drumming to how everything works in the universe. For some reason, I kind of understood what he was saying, but I still had some very specific questions.

"So I figured the best way to instigate a productive session with Freddie was to watch videos of Buddy Rich together. Buddy would do something, and Freddie would be saying, 'See, see. Look at that.' I could somewhat understand what Buddy was doing technically, but Buddy had so much more than technique. He always had fluidity and musicality

in addition to the technical ability to do things that most people couldn't even think about doing.

"The bottom line of what Freddie taught me was that the body works in a certain way. Even though everyone's bone and muscle construction might be slightly different, you should never obstruct or change your body's natural motion when you hit a drum."

After his first session with Gruber, Weckl tore apart his setup and started over. "I realized

"I can count on one hand the times I've been nervous when I played, but having Charlie Watts and Jim Keltner sitting there was like playing for the President and the Vice-President."

that I had developed a drum setup that was completely detrimental to playing with natural body motion," Dave says. "So I decided to change my entire setup in terms of positioning so that I could optimize the conventional grip to the fullest. I took everything away except the bass drum, and I sat there moving the seat up and down, backward and forward, looking for the most comfortable position. I ended up raising the seat a good inch from where I had been sitting.

"Then I added the snare drum, which I think of as the steering wheel. It has to be in a very comfortable place where you never have to move your body to hit a rimshot. I realized that it is impossible—for me, anyway—to have the drums set up in such a way as to use both conventional [traditional] and matched grip in a totally natural fashion. There has to be some sacrifice somewhere. I never played matched grip very much anyway, except when I was going back and forth between

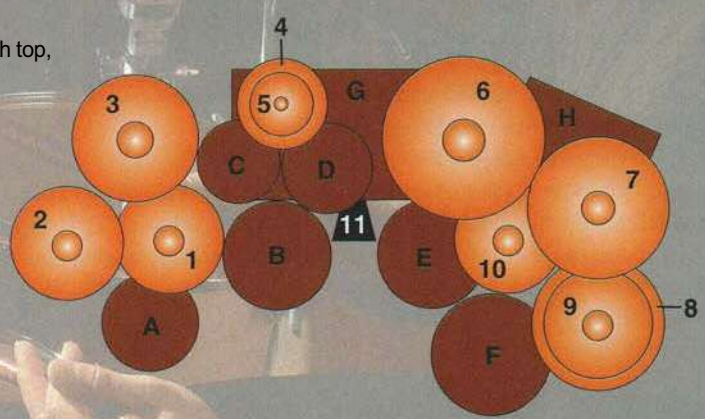
Dave's User-Friendly Setup

Drumset: Yamaha *Maple Custom*
A. 5x13 *Dave Weckl* signature snare
B. 5 1/2x14 *Dave Weckl* signature snare (aluminum shell)
C. 8x10 tom
D. 8x12 tom
E. 12x14 tom
F. 14x16 tom
G. 16x22 bass drum
H, 16x18 bass drum (played with remote pedal)

Symbals: Zildjian
1. 14" hi-hats *(New Beat* top, *Rock* top on bottom)
2. 15" *Azuka* (or 10" *K* splash)
3. 17" *A Custom* crash (or *K Dark* crash)
4. 12" K splash *(Brilliant)*
5. 6" splash (mounted upside down on top of 12")
6. 22" *K Custom* medium ride (or 20")
7. 19" *A Custom* crash (or 17" *K Custom Dark* crash)
8. 18" *K Custom Dark* crash
9. 14" K China
10. 14" hi-hats *(A Custom* crash top, *K* top bottom)
11. cowbell

Heads: Remo

Sticks: Vic Firth



using a cross-stick on the snare drum and then hitting the toms with the back of the stick, or when the conventional grip wasn't working because the snare drum was set up at a more natural angle for matched. So I positioned everything for conventional grip.

"If you just move your left hand with conventional grip, you'll see that the stick falls at an angle. So the first step was angling the snare drum to lean from left to right, kind of like the old jazz guys used to tilt it, but not at quite as severe an angle. That way, I can hit rimshots with my left hand without having to lean.

"Next I got rid of my 8" tom-tom. I had been tuning my drums higher anyway, so I was running out of room at the top, tonality-wise. I put my 10" tom where my 8" had been, on a stand to my left beside the bass drum. I mounted it high and angled so that I could get to it without having to twist my body or dip my shoulder, and it would be very natural going from the snare drum to the 10" tom with the left hand. I mounted the 12" tom on the middle of the bass drum, angled as well. The whole kit is kind of leaning from top to bottom, left to right, so that the left hand falls naturally."

Once the setup had been adjusted, Weckl turned his attention to his left-hand grip. "Actually, when I do clinics I get into a whole thing about how it isn't really a 'grip,'" Weckl says. "It's a matter of simply holding the stick. And boy, there's a fine line between holding the stick and dropping it, which I've done quite a bit because you can get in such a relaxed place that the sticks start flying. So that's where there needs to be a little bit of the grip concept."

For years, Weckl had held his sticks very close to the butt end, but he no longer does that. "Freddie talks about letting the sticks do as much of the work as possible," Weckl explains. "In order for that to happen, there has to be balance and a continuum. If you hold a drumstick at the end between your thumb and index finger and let it hang down, and then you put it in motion, it's going to swing back and forth very freely. If you put it in enough motion, it would actually go in a

"With this album, we tracked almost everything totally live—no click tracks. We were just playing music. Wow, what a concept!"

Weckl On The Record

Here are the albums Dave feels best represent his playing:

Artist	Album Title
The Dave Weckl Band	Rhythm Of The Soul
Dave Grusin	Presents West Side Story
Dave Weckl	Masterplan
Dave Weckl	Heads Up
Dave Weckl	Hardwired
Mike Stern	Between The Lines
Chick Corea Elektric Band	all
Chick Corea Akoustic Band	all
Michel Camilo	Why Not
Michel Camilo	Suntan
Michel Camilo	Rendezvous
Steve Khan	Public Access
Jeff Beal	Three Graces
Tom Kennedy	Basses Loaded
Robert Plant	The Honeydrippers
Bill Connors	Step It

Some of the drummers who have inspired Dave and who he enjoys watching on video or seeing perform live: Dennis Chambers, Steve Smith, Vinnie Colaiuta, Virgil Donati, Sonny Emory, Gary Novak, Brian Blade, Carl Allen, Adam Nussbaum, Al Foster, Bill Stewart, Sonny Greer, Sonny Payne, "Papa" Jo Jones, Louie Bellson, Giovanni Hidalgo, and Trilok Gurtu.

And here are specific records that have inspired Dave

Artist	Album	Drummer
Buddy Rich	(all his big band records, especially '60s/'70s era)	Buddy Rich
Chick Corea	Friends	Steve Gadd
Lee Ritenour	any	Steve Gadd
Steve Khan	any	Steve Gadd
Ben Sidran	Cat In The Hat	Steve Gadd
Steps	any	Steve Gadd
Stuff	any	Steve Gadd
Paul Simon	any	Steve Gadd
Quincy Jones	Sounds & Stuff Like That	Steve Gadd
Steely Dan	Aja	Steve Gadd
Chuck Mangione	Alive	Steve Gadd
Al Jarreau	"Spam"	Steve Gadd
Stan Kenton	any	Peter Erskine
Maynard Ferguson	any	Peter Erskine
Weather Report	any	Peter Erskine
Billy Cobham	Spectrum	Billy Cobham
Billy Cobham	Crossroads	Billy Cobham
The Police	Synchronicity (video)	Stewart Copeland
Brecker Bros	Heavy Metal Bebop	Terry Bozzio
Tower Of Power	Live And In Living Color	David Garibaldi
Earth Wind & Fire	any	Freddie White
Pat Metheny	80/81	Jack DeJohnette
Miles Davis	Four And More	Tony Williams
VSOP	VSOP	Tony Wihams
John Coltrane,	BlueTrane	Philly Joe Jones
Pete Fountain	(any late 60s/early '70s)	Jack Sperling
Led Zeppelin	any	John Bonham
Little Village	Little Village	Jim Keltner

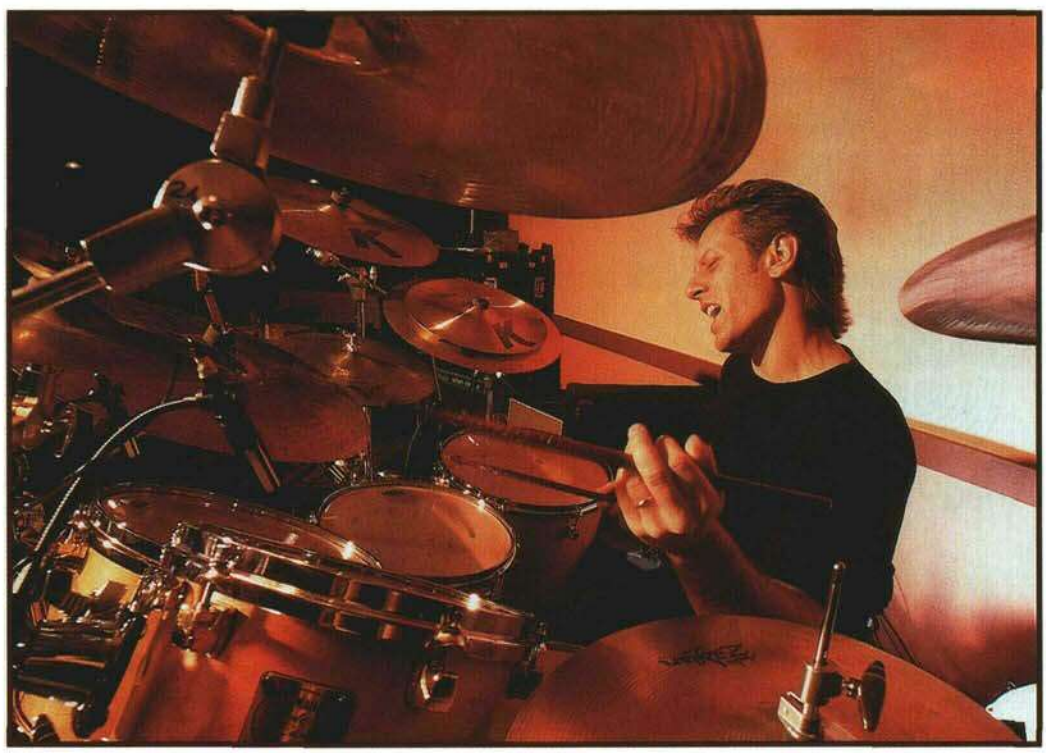
circle.

"I was originally taught that you make the stroke, and then you pull the stick back up and that's the end of the stroke. Well, that's *you* doing all the work. Freddie's whole thing is that after you put the stick in motion, the other half is the stick rebounding back. But you have to allow it to bounce by having the stick balanced in your hand so it works like a see-saw. I was stopping the stroke after the stick came off the drum, and part of the reason was that I was holding the stick so far back that it couldn't do its thing.

"When the stick is balanced, you can hold your left hand out straight, hold the stick with your thumb, and just use a wrist stroke. The fingers don't really have anything to do with it. All the great players had that figured out a long time ago. I've seen videos of Tony Williams doing open single-stroke rolls, and there were no fingers anywhere near the stick. His left hand was wide open, and the thumb and wrist were controlling everything. I adapted that and found that this is where all the power comes from—lowering the hand and allowing the rebound."

With his right hand, Weckl began gripping—er, holding—the stick between his thumb and middle finger instead of between the thumb and index finger. "Again, it's a matter of balance," he says. "The forefinger becomes more of a guide, and you are loose enough to let the stick rebound almost 180° off the head. But your hand doesn't move. You start and finish with your hand parallel to the drum and straight with your arm.

"This is all palm-down, by the way," he clarifies. "At clinics, I have people



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wave at me with just their wrists and then wave with their fingers to see the difference in how the wrists work and how the fingers work. When you're waving with your wrist, your palm is down, so if you put a stick in there, palm-down is the natural position for a wrist stroke. If you wave with your fingers and your wrist is stationary, and then you put a drumstick in there, the stick is going to move in a parallel motion over the drumhead and isn't going to hit it. So you need to turn your hand over so that your thumb is up for finger strokes.

"A lot of people—myself included for a long time—try to meld the two together, but it just doesn't work. Those are two completely different techniques. I use whichever approach fits the style I'm playing. If I'm playing a more straight-ahead jazz thing or something with a lot of multiple bounces, there are a lot more fingers involved, so then I'll be in the thumb-up position. But normally it feels more comfortable and natural to me to play with the palm down."

In terms of what's "natural," many people contend that matched grip makes a lot more sense, pointing out that conventional grip originated in military bands in which a drum was worn over the shoulder. The conventional left-hand grip was developed simply to accommodate the angle of the drum. Asked which grip he would use if starting over from scratch, Weckl considers the question for several moments before answering.

"I'd probably still use conventional, even though matched grip is probably more natural," he says. "It's hard to say for sure, but I do know that I now see conventional grip as being a whole hell of a lot easier than it is usually made out to be. Freddie will talk until the cows come home about how there really isn't any difference at all between the two—which I still find hard to fully accept.

"But for whatever reason, maybe because I've been doing it for nearly thirty years, I can't make certain music feel right with matched grip. It's an emotional thing that doesn't have anything to do with technique. A lot of people just like the way conventional grip looks and feels, and there's something to that, because ultimately it's all about feel. When you hold the sticks with conventional grip, it's like the hands are complementing each other. It's a give-and-take, like a boxer with a jab and an uppercut.

"To me, there is a correlation between using matched grip and playing with my feet flat on the pedals. But when I play with my heels up, where both feet are playing off one another and the center of balance is my rear end on the stool, I get the same feeling of give-and-take from both sides of my body that I get from my hands with conventional grip. When I play flat-footed, I feel very balanced, but it also feels very sterile, and that's how I feel about matched grip."

Once he had addressed the details of his setup and hand position, Weckl concentrated on the big picture. "Body motion has everything to do with the time feel," he says. "For example, when playing a slow tempo, you want to make a smooth, continuous motion with your arm," he says, demonstrating a large, almost circular motion in which there is a lot of forearm movement.

"Compare that to the idea of just holding your arm stationary over the cymbal, and moving your wrist only when it's time to play the next beat," he says, demonstrating a feel that sounds and looks sporadic. "At a fast tempo, the notes are close enough together that you can achieve a continuum with that technique, but at a slow tempo, you need to maintain some kind of motion between the strokes.

"The other side of the coin with fast tempos is that you don't always make the same motion for each note, because it will sound choppy," he says. "You can play three-note groupings by combining arm, wrist, and finger movements into one large gesture, which smooths out the time feel." By way of demonstration, he plays a fast, traditional jazz ride cymbal pattern. Watching just his arm, you can clearly see the quarter-note pulse. The "swung" notes in between are played with combinations of wrist and fingers, producing an extremely legato effect.

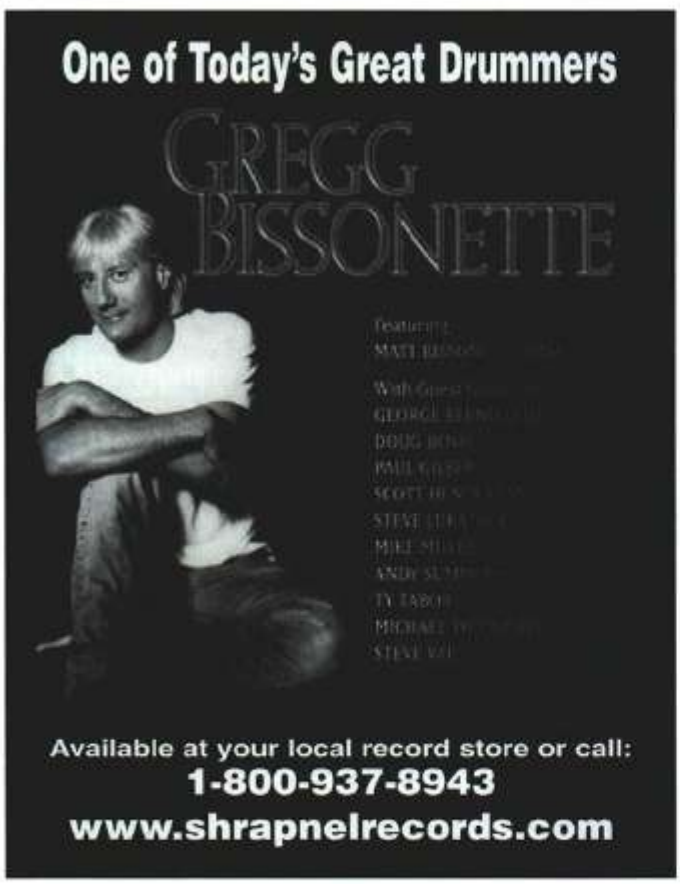
"You know," Weckl adds, "I've been speaking in technical terms, but this really isn't about technique. I don't need to play a faster single-stroke roll at this point in my career—although that kind of came with the territory of this approach. But that was not the object. This was a means to an end, and the end was to make the music feel good."

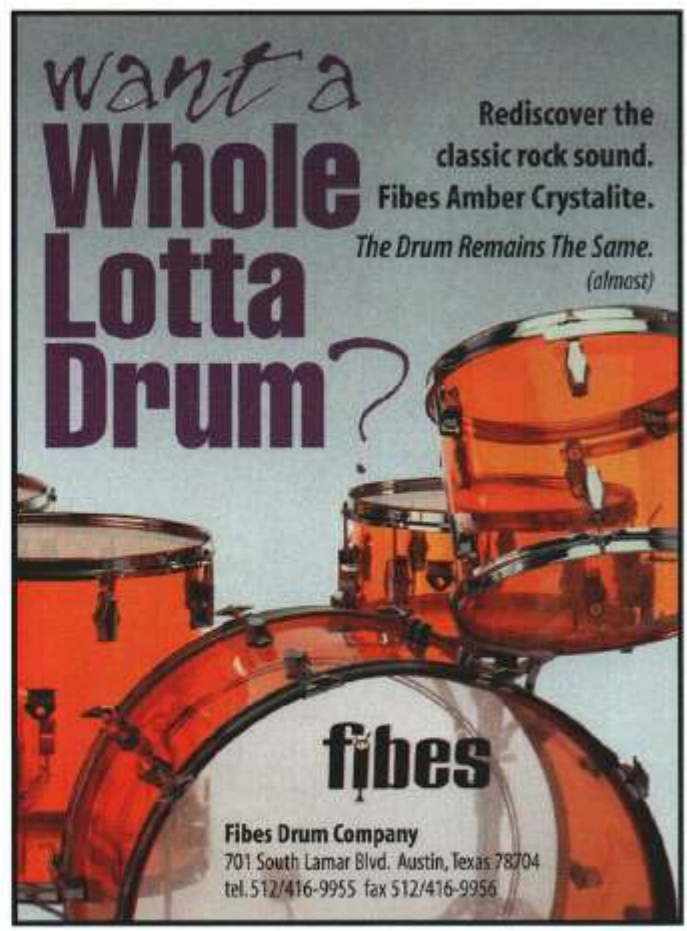
Wasn't that always the goal?

"Exactly," Weckl says. "I was always trying to make the time feel better, but I never understood the way to go about it. For the biggest part of my career, I have been involved with playing relatively complicated music. It takes a certain amount of effort and concentration to play that music, and the idea for me was to try to get as close to perfect time as possible. That's the drummer's gig; you want the time to be rock-solid.

"So you're trying to lock in with the click. Although you're trying to be relaxed with it, that's kind of hard to do when you've got a concept that the time has to be perfect, so you start to tense up. I practiced endless hours to click tracks, and then I got blasted for having too-perfect time—which was kind of funny to me at the time. But now I understand the criticism, because I really do feel a difference in my time feel."

On *Rhythm Of The Soul,* Weckl decided to take a different approach from his previous solo albums. "I wanted to write some music that could actually be played by a band," he says. "On previous records, my partner Jay Oliver and I got into a very formulated way of writing—partially because we were always under a time crunch to get it done. We would start out with me behind the drums and Jay playing along on a keyboard, but we were composing with a computer, so it ultimately turned into computer music. The computer can be a great composing tool, but it also allows you to be as complex as you can conceive of. So we found ourselves writing extremely difficult





In The Zone

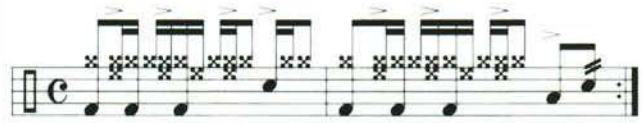
Dave Weckl's new, looser groove approach can be heard all over his new band album, *Rhythm Of The Soul* (Stretch/Concord). Here are a couple of patterns Dave transcribed from the album.

"The Zone"

Basic "A" section groove

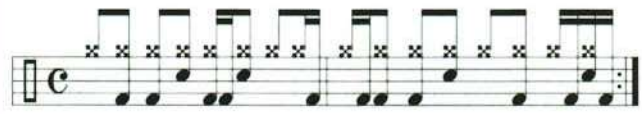
Basic "B" groove

Groove played (on rims—right hand notated above staff, left hand on fourth space) during guitar vamp before organ solo

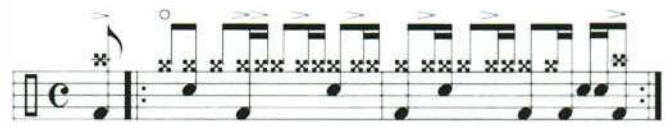


"Rhythm Dance"

Basic "A" groove



"B" groove



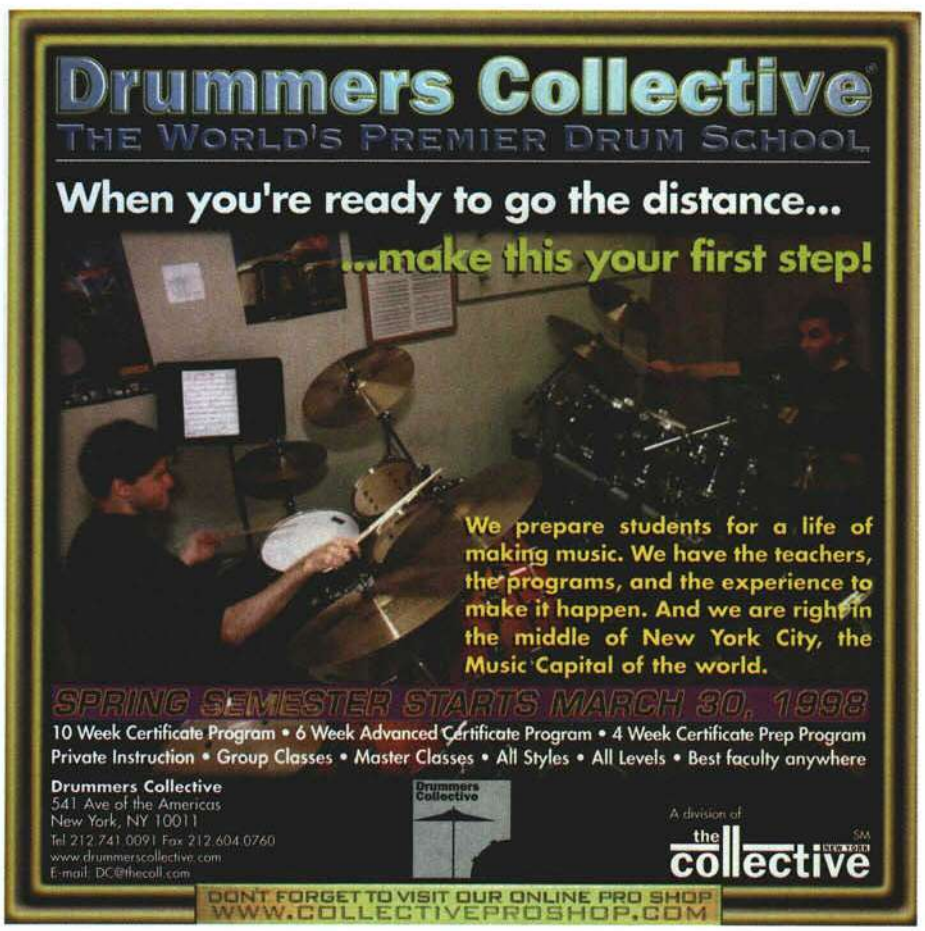
parts for the other instruments.

"When it was time to record, I would do my part along with a computer track, and then we would bring in musicians one by one to overdub. And although we got pretty good at what we called 'pre-planned spontaneity,' it was what it was: computer music.

"With this album, we tracked almost everything totally live. Most of the stuff was done with no click tracks. We were just playing music." Weckl shakes his head, chuckling. "Wow, what a concept!"

On the very first track, "The Zone," Weckl used a sideswiping motion on the hi-hats reminiscent of Ringo Starr. "That was something Steve Smith turned me on to," Weckl says. "He was also the guy who motivated me to study with Freddie. Steve had gotten into the whole motion thing, and he was watching videos of every drummer he could find and checking out what these guys who had such great feels were doing physically to make it happen. The thing he noticed with Ringo was that sideswiping, back-and-forth motion on the hi-hat.

"So I decided to check it out. When Jay and I were in the writing stage for this record, we decided to go for R&B, slinky New Orleans types of feels. I did the writing for the record with an 18" bass drum, a snare drum, hi-hats, and a cymbal. I was really trying to concentrate on feel. With The Zone,' I could not make it feel right unless I used that sideswiping motion. It has this whole other lope when you sideswipe like that. It kind of swings a little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bit, but it's certainly not a shuffle. But it's also very different than playing 8th notes up and down. It's like the New Orleans thing combined with the straight 8ths of rock 'n' roll.

"I think the modern-day player who can capture that feel better than anybody is Jim Keltner. His feels are just ridiculous. You don't know what the hell he's doing or how he's doing it. It's just a physical motion going on that creates the feel. And Jim used to study with Freddie a long time ago.

"Jim is really a sweet man, too. He always comes around when I'm playing. In fact, when I was playing with Mike Stern in LA early last year, Jim brought Charlie Watts out to see me. I can count on one hand the times I've been nervous when I played, but that night...! wasn't nervous, exactly, but having Charlie and Jim sitting there was like playing for the President and the Vice-President. Those guys always downplay what they do, but it's that feel thing—the Gadd thing, the Ringo thing, the Elvin thing. You can't put that in a book."

The tune "Mud Sauce" has an especially slippery New Orleans feel, enhanced by a fat snare timbre that sounds as if Weckl might have been using multi-rods. "Those were actually regular drumsticks, but the snare drum I start off on is a little 8" drum that sounds really...*weird,"* Weckl says, laughing. "The drum is tuned low and the snares are real loose, so it gets a really funky sound. And then the main snare drum on that track was a prototype—a version of my signature drum that's 13" in diameter with a wood hoop. It's a little bit drier and warmer than my other snare drums."

Amazingly, "101 Shuffle" is only the second shuffle Weckl has ever recorded. "I remember seeing something in print one time that said something about 'drummers who listen to Dave Weckl all the time but who can't play a shuffle.' I realized that most people had never heard me play a shuffle. I did one on the *Honeydrippers* album with Robert Plant, but none of the musicians were credited on that album, so most people don't even know that I did that.

"But I like to play shuffles too, you know," Dave says. "It's a hard feel to get happening, and there are a million ways to do it. I'll never forget the first time I saw Steve Gadd do a shuffle. He was playing the complete shuffle rhythm with his right hand, but he was playing the part of it that would be the standard jazz pattern on the ride cymbal and playing the pickup notes to 2 and 4 on the snare drum, keeping a backbeat with his left hand. I tried it, and *man*—talk about keeping a consistent backbeat! No wonder it felt like that. But then, you could never get it to feel like Gadd anyway."

While some may interpret the music on *Rhythm Of The Soul* as representing a change of direction for Weckl, he says that this has more to do with the music that originally inspired him. "Most of the music I've done over the past few years has had the fusion/complicated-jazz label on it," Weckl explains. "I loved the music I was making and the people I was playing with, but when I was a teenager, the music that got to me emotionally was R&B and funk. That's what was in my car all the time, and that's what sent shivers down my spine.

"So for this record, Jay and I wanted to concentrate on an era of music that we really loved, which was the older R&B.

But I didn't want to just make a 2-and-4 record, either, and I wasn't trying to not be myself. This is just another part of me that I haven't been able to show for a long time. It's an honest direction, and it really is the place I want to be right now, musically."

One night during the mid-'70s, TV talk-show host Tom Snyder asked John Lennon about the breakup of his former band. "How could someone not want to be in the *Beatles?"* Snyder asked, incredulously. Similarly, many have wondered why Dave Weckl chose to leave his gig with Chick Corea.

"When we had the Elektric Band and Akoustic Band together, the whole idea was to have an organized band situation that, Chick, John Patitucci, and I could work in, then leave to do our own things, and then come back to," Weckl explains. "John was actually the first to decide that his personal situation no longer allowed him to be part of it, so once he pulled out, the unit wasn't a unit anymore. It wouldn't have mattered who replaced him, because the original chemistry was gone.

"Chick and I actually kept it together for another year after John left, but I was so close to burning out that I just had to stop. We had been doing both the Akoustic and Elektric bands, plus I was doing my own records and clinics. From about 1988 to 1992, I was on the road nine to ten months out of the year. I was trying to keep myself together for the sake of the music and the band, and Chick was totally supportive, but he knew that I wasn't happy. So we sat down and talked about it, and we mutually agreed that it was time to move on. There were no problems between us from a musical or personal standpoint; I just needed a break."

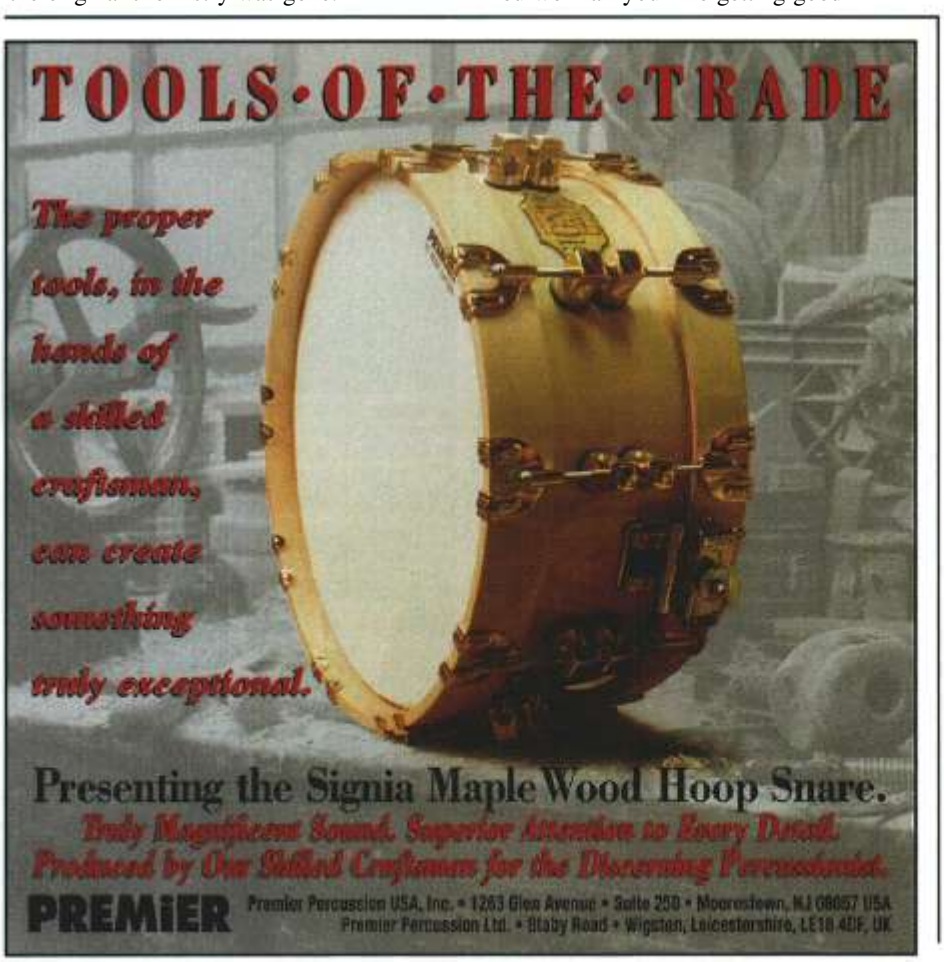
But in Weckl's case, "break" didn't translate to "vacation." More than anything, he wanted to practice drums and work on his composing. "I was used to having time to devote to learning and feeling like I was progressing," Dave says. "I think it's important for most people to feel that they are getting better at something. Stagnation is the worst feeling for anyone—at least, it is for me.

"It can be a funny catch-22 situation. You work all your life getting good enough to go out and do these amazing gigs, and then when you're actually out doing them, you don't have time to do the necessary preparation it takes to keep it going, and you certainly don't have time to put in the work it would take to get to the next level so you can maintain a feeling of self-gratification. That's not to say that the gig isn't gratifying, because there's nothing like being out there playing music every night. Some people are happy to just be playing, and they never practice. It works for a lot of people; it doesn't work for me. I have to feel like I'm improving.

"I need a balance. It's great to progress to a certain point and then go out and do great music with a great band and enjoy being at a certain level. But at some point it's time to continue the self-exploration and experimentation for the sake of gaining new knowledge. I also need a balance in life. My wife, Joyce, and I just had our first child, Claire Elyse, and for me, plugging into the family and taking time off from music can really freshen things up when I get back to it."

Weckl found some of the new input he desired through his studies with Freddie Gruber, but much of it came from his opportunity to get involved in different musical situations. "It was scary for a minute, leaving an organized unit that kept me working steadily most of the year and then going into a freelance situation," Weckl admits. "But the nice thing about freelance stuff is that you get to plug into a lot of different music and play with a lot of different musicians.

"I got reunited with Michel Camillo for a period of time, with Anthony Jackson. Playing with Michel is always a great experience musically and very challenging. We did some touring and recorded a great album called *Rendezvous.* I also got to play with Steve Khan and Eliane Elias, and I did some things with Paul Simon again when Steve Gadd couldn't make some dates. Dennis Chambers and I were swapping chairs with the Brecker Brothers for a while, and when I did a summer tour of Europe with the Breckers I hooked up with Mike Stern. We started working together in 1994, recording the CD *Between The Lines.* So that was nice too, because when you work with someone over a long period of time, you form good personal and musical relationships with them."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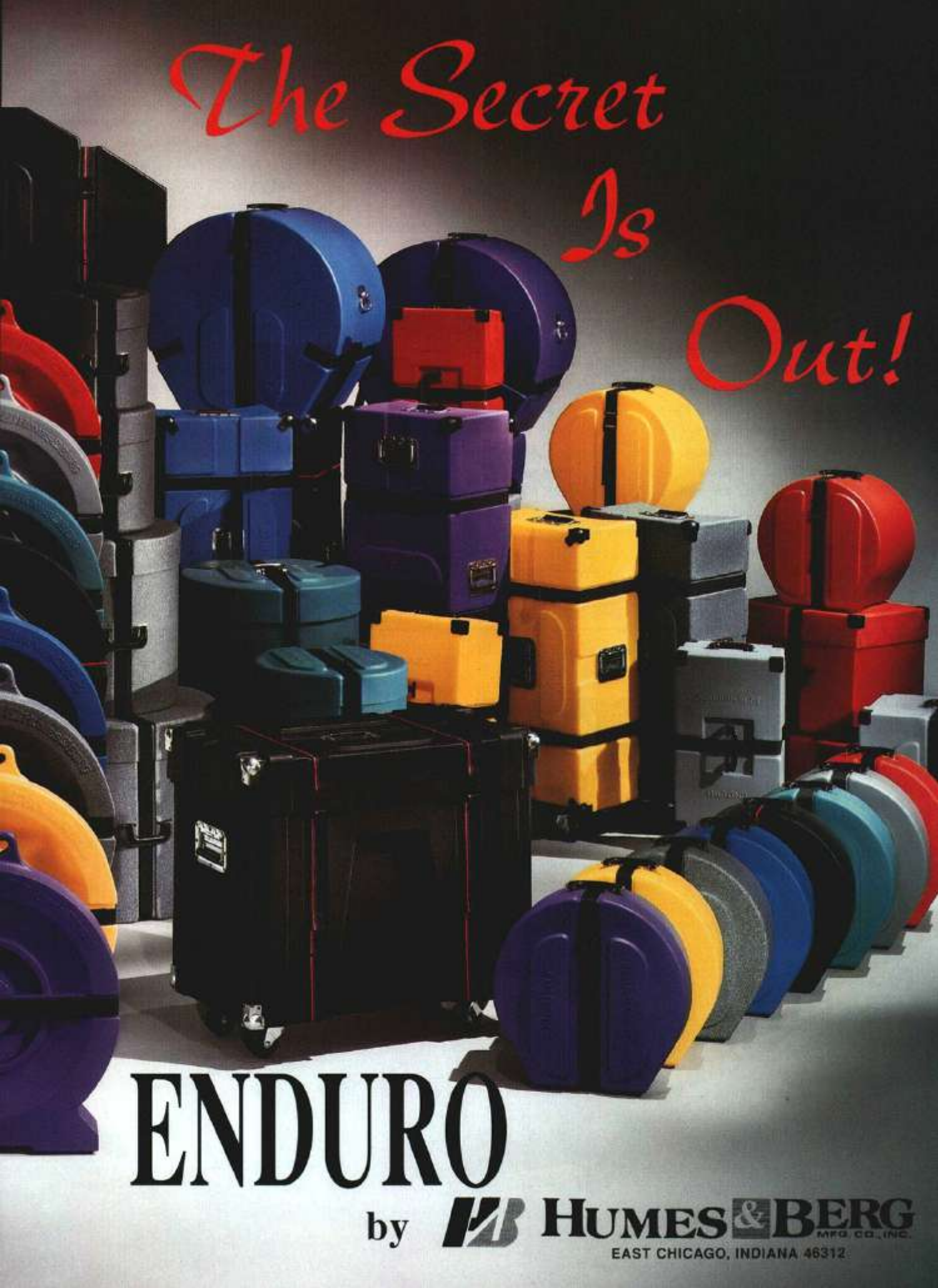
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Weckl was especially happy to have participated in the album *Dave Grusin Presents West Side Story,* along with such players as Michael Brecker, Ronnie Cuber, Bill Evans, John Patitucci, and Lee Ritenour. "That music was a bitch, and we only had three days to pull it off," Weckl says. "But I think that's one of my best recorded performances in terms of big band and feel."

Can a drummer possibly record music from *West Side Story* without feeling the ghost of Buddy Rich standing over his shoulder? "In fact, when I was fifteen, I played Buddy's arrangement of *West Side Story* with my high school band," Weckl replies, "so I did my best to imitate his solo, which still stands as one of the most musical drum solos ever recorded. But as far as this recording, the arrangements were so different that I wasn't thinking about Buddy's approach. The whole focus was on playing something that fit these arrangements.

"I also do some occasional gigs with the Buddy Rich Band, and when playing all those great old charts it's hard not to think about the way Buddy did them. So for me with that band, I don't try to copy what Buddy did, but the thought of him and his approach to that music is always on my mind. It's like a celebration of him, his band, and the music they played."

Compared to the responsibilities of being a member of an established band, freelancing offers the promise of being able to have more control over your own destiny and take time off whenever you want. It's nice in theory, but in reality many freelancers get caught in the trap of feeling that they can never say no to a gig, with the result that they work non-stop.

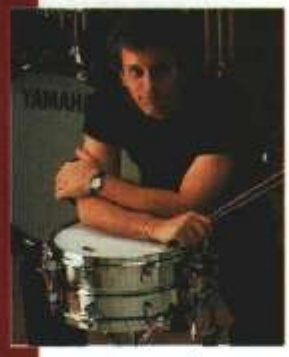
"Yeah, it's hard to say no, because you never know when the phone is going to ring again," Weckl says. "But you can't say yes to everything. One thing that's important to understand is that you need to develop a reputation for being responsible as soon as possible. That means if you say yes to a gig, then you've said yes to a gig. If the phone rings a week later with a better gig, in most cases you can't back out of the first gig to do the second one. There have been lots of times that I was kicking myself because I had already committed to something and had to turn something else down.

"I'm not saying you should never accept another job; it depends on a lot of circumstances. But if you've said yes to someone who provides you with regular work throughout the year, it's important that you stand by your decision. I know a few young drummers who are good players, but who have developed a reputation as the drummer who might bail on your gig if another gig comes along. That's a dangerous thing to get into.

"All you have to do is put yourself in the leader's position," Weckl says. "If you called somebody that you really wanted on the gig, and they said yes and you advertised that this person was going to be there, and all of a sudden they pulled out at the last minute, how would you feel? That's something I've always thought about as a sideman, so if I say yes, then that's that.

"But yeah, it is very difficult to say no when you're a freelance musician. I still have trouble. When the phone rings and somebody wants you, you feel like you have to do it. And it's good to do as much as you can, especially when you're young. But now that I'm getting older, it's getting

"Two are better than one."



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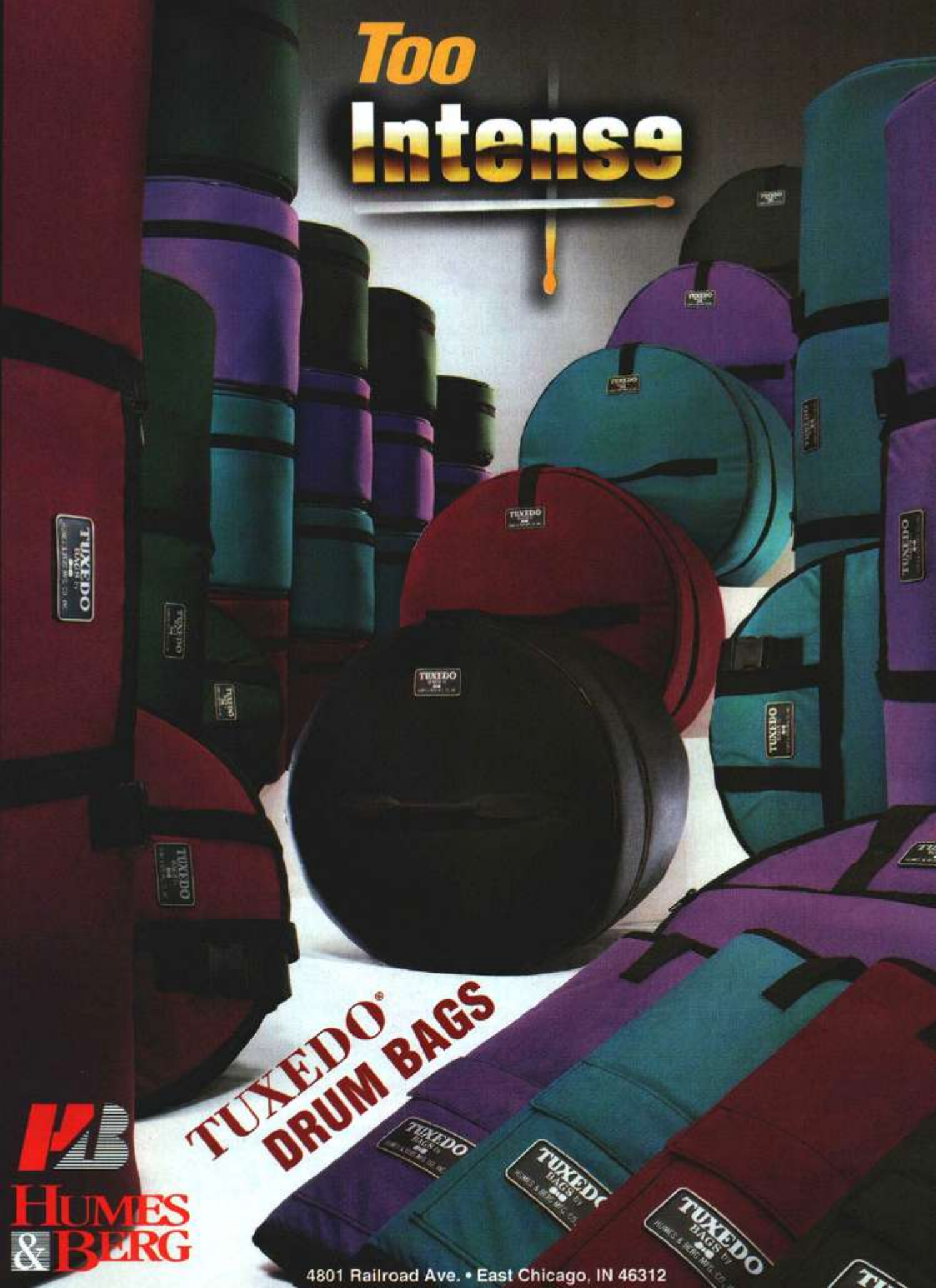
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easier to say no," Weckl says, laughing.

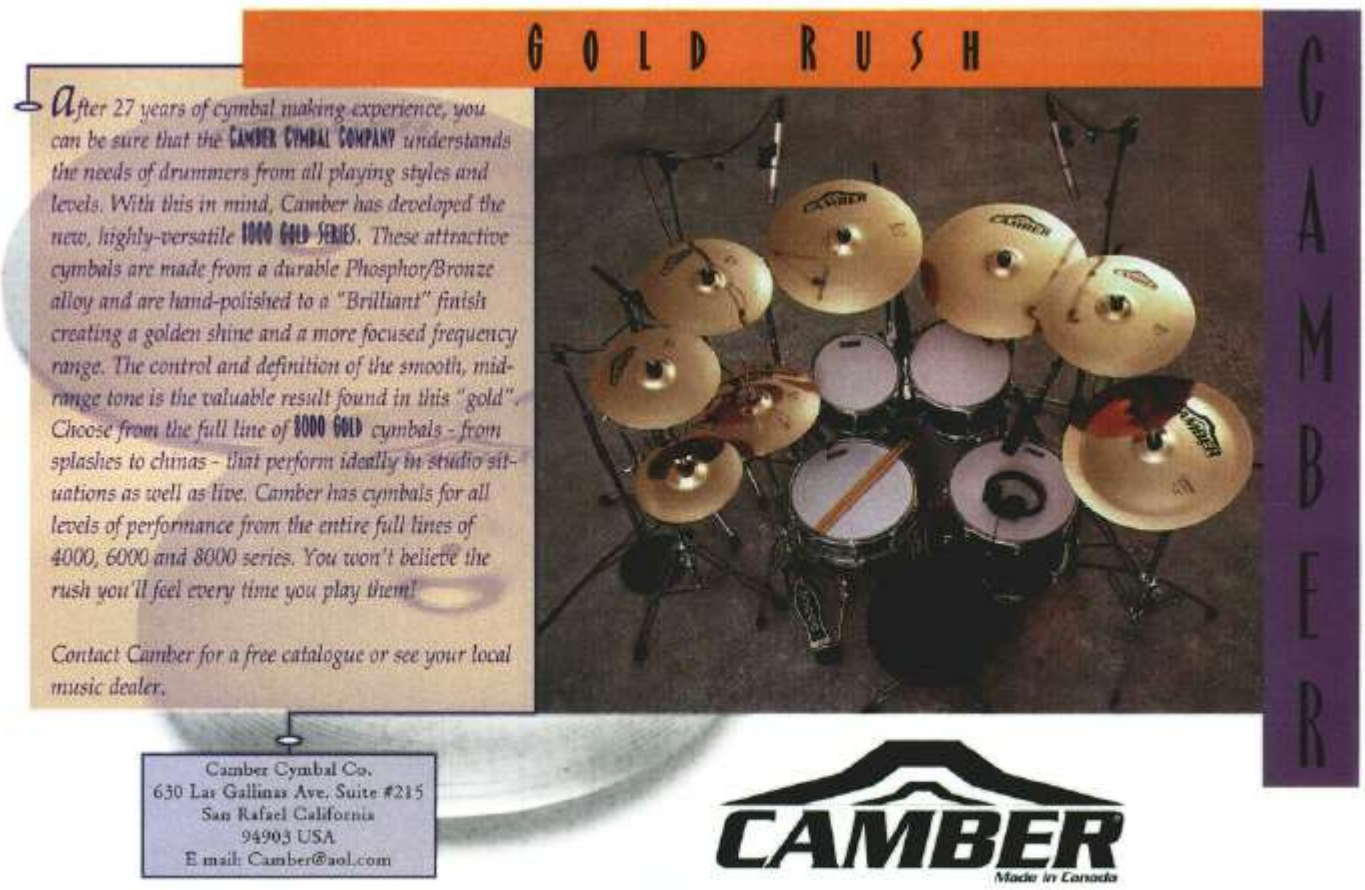
Having freelanced as a sideman for a while, Weckl is now ready for the challenge of being a bandleader. "For the first time, I'm feeling that it's really time for me to do my own thing," he says. "I have my own ideas about the way I want to do things, so it's time for me to do that. It doesn't mean that I don't want to ever be a sideman again or play with anybody else's band. I'll always look forward to those situations. But it's time to check out how my ideas relate to the listening audience."

Judging by the reception given the Dave Weckl band during a week-long trial run this past fall at Catalina's in Hollywood, the group should expect enthusiastic audiences when it begins touring this year. "A lot of our goals were recognized with *Rhythm Of The Soul,* in the sense that we went out and played this music live without everyone having to be so intensely focused on parts," Weckl says. "And we actually played songs, which was refreshing for a lot of people to hear. We were not just going up there and playing a head and blowing and trying to get into a 'dig me' kind of improvisational thing. We opened the tunes up for the live show so there was more solo space, but we're still keeping the basic concept of the record. We played seven to nine songs per set, instead of the usual four or five with long solos, which is the usual jazz mentality. That's fine in some situations, but I think the average listener doesn't relate to it and therefore can become bored pretty quickly.

"People weren't used to seeing me sit there and play a groove," Weckl says, smiling. "I've always loved to do that, but I haven't had the opportunity because of my love for another kind of music that is more jazz and fusion and Latin. The challenge is to lay back and just play a groove and make the music feel good, but not disappoint the drum heads out there that want to hear solo stuff. But I think we had a pretty good balance, and the response was great. Right from square one, when we started off the night with '101 Shuffle,' everybody had a good idea that they were going to be able to tap their feet to this music.

"For me, it's about communicating with the audience. I also like to communicate with the audience verbally and give them a little insight about the music and the people on stage. I want to bring the stage and the audience closer together so it's not, 'I'm the untouchable musician doing my thing and you're just the audience sitting there listening.' That's such a stupid concept. No wonder jazz is perceived as such an artistic thing, because there certainly isn't much audience involvement. Not that I want to get everybody clapping their hands along with the music, but the more you can involve them, the better. I don't accept the idea that people can't have a good time because this is an 'artistic' show and you're supposed to just sit there and appreciate the amazing musicians on stage. People want to have a good time.

"So that's what I'm trying to do with this music. When people allow themselves to discover the emotion within instrumental music, they learn something. They have to use their own emotions and minds to think about what they are feeling from the music. But it doesn't mean they can't have fun doing it."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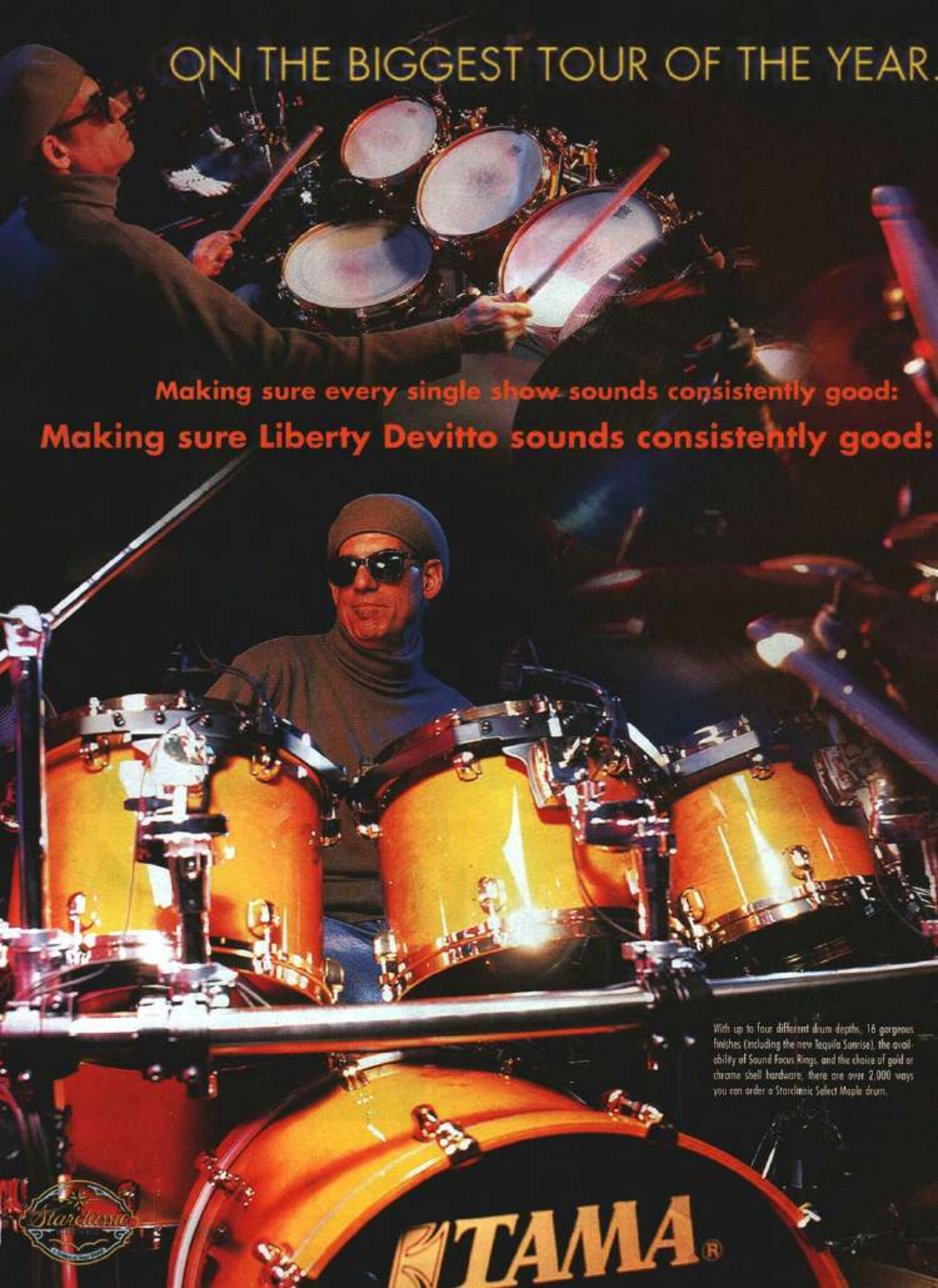
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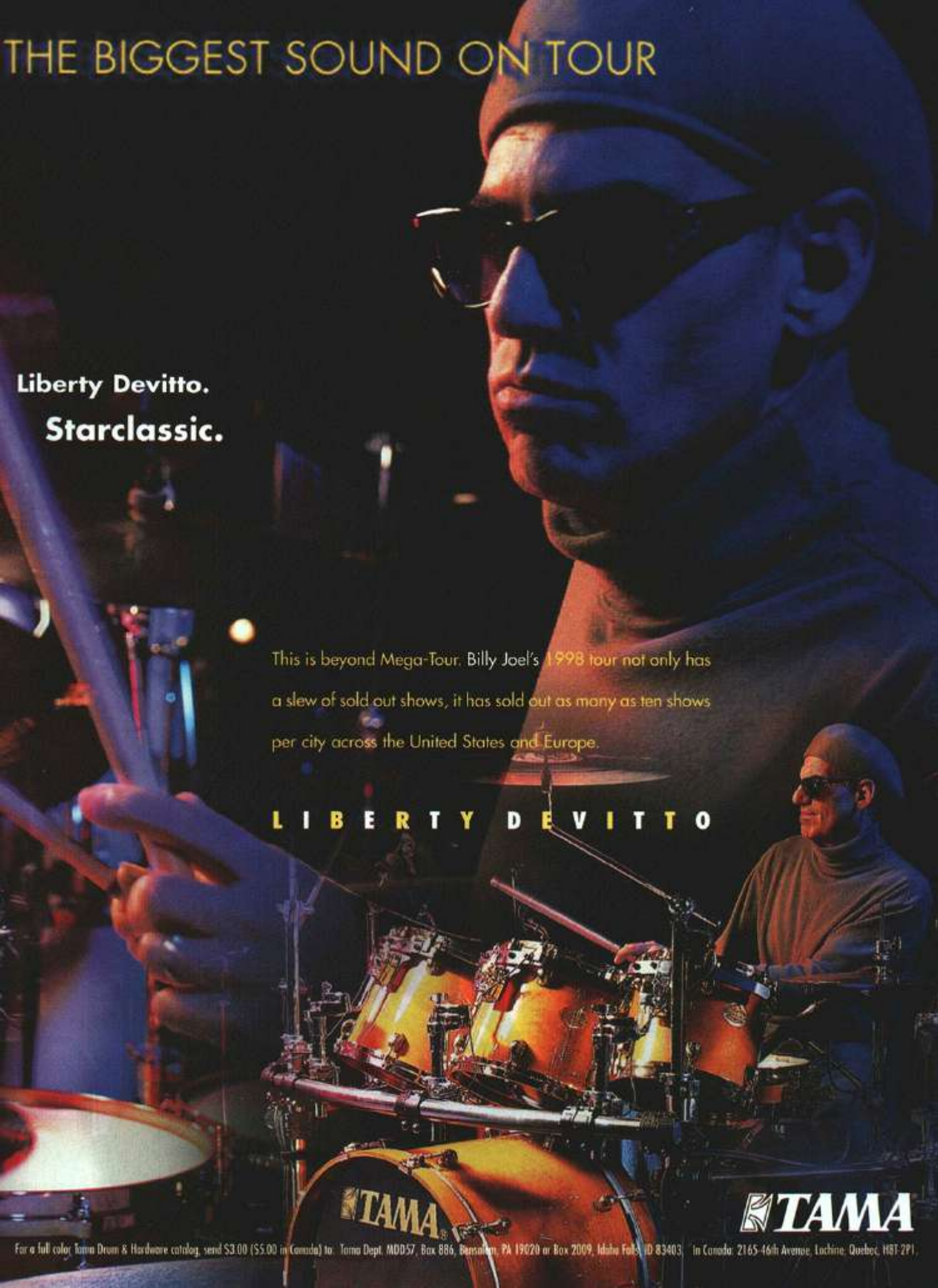
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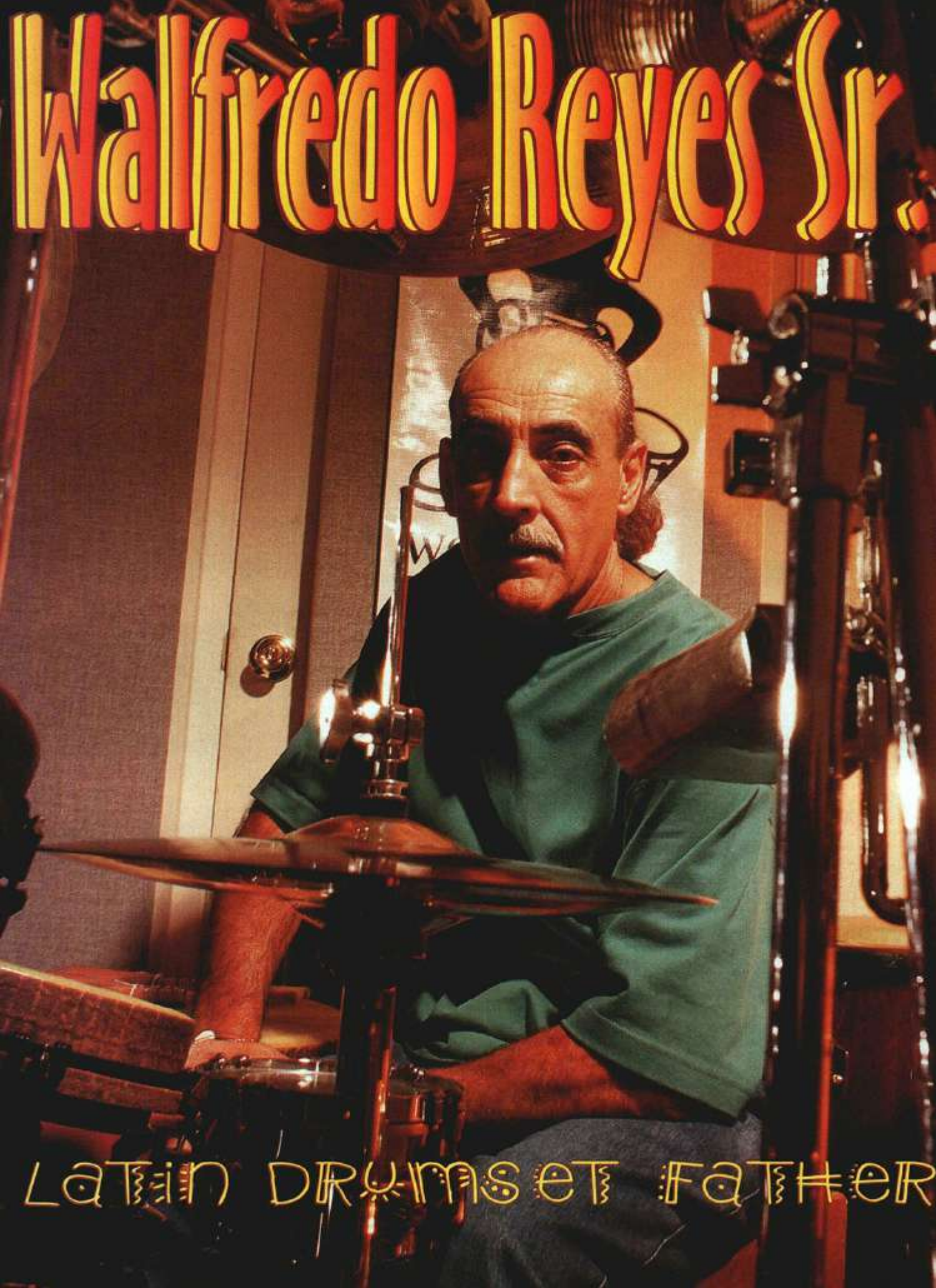
Walfredo Reyes Sr.



Latin Drumset Father

by Robyn Flans

Photos by Jay Blakesberg

World music is a hip catch-phrase for many musicians who believe they've created something unique by combining influences they've gathered in their musical travels. But many don't realize that world music has been around for quite some time, pioneered by such innovators as Walfredo Reyes Sr.

Born in Cuba in 1933, Reyes has also lived in the United States and Puerto Rico, gathering ideas and concepts that *he* combined. It was a time of revolution: the jet age, creating the possibility of easy travel—and television, where you could now visit new places without leaving your home. The cultural and musical exchange inspired people such as Reyes to think about uniting the drumset with percussion in popular music.

Reyes wants to make it clear that he didn't originate the use of drumset in Cuban music. But he *was* among the first to integrate percussion and drumset. Over forty years ago it was Reyes, along with Guillermo Barreto and Danny Perez, who were influenced by the new bebop music and seeing Perez Prado's drummer, who did kicks on a bass drum. They began to replace the traditional percussion instruments with drumset components, transferring those rhythms to the set. Around that same time drummers in the United States began experimenting with Latin rhythms, playing conga parts on tom-toms and cross-stick backbeats on snare drums.

"With the influence of American drummers and Chano Pozo with Dizzy Gillespie," Reyes explains, "the whole thing started to meld together. Mario Bauza was the conductor for the Machito Orchestra and one of the people who kept true Cuban music going in the United States. In 1948, Mario introduced Chano Pozo to Dizzy Gillespie, and even though I have photos of Cuban musicians introducing Cuban rhythms to Americans as far back as '46, together Dizzy Gillespie and Chano Pozo made famous the tune 'Manteca,' which was the start of it all. It was the marriage of bebop and the conga drum, and from then on American drummers were trying to imitate the conga drum rhythms and Cuban drummers were trying to incorporate the Cuban rhythms onto the drumset."

Reyes is a true international musician—he has played with the finest Flamenco dancers from Spain, the Cuban and Puerto Rican greats, Mexican orchestras, and some of the most renowned entertainers in the world, including Paul Anka, Josephine Baker, Tony Bennett, Milton Berle, Victor Borge, George Burns, Xavier Cugat, Sammy Davis Jr., Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Durante, Robert Goulet, Frankie Lane, Liberace, Anthony Newley, Bernadette Peters, Juliet Prowse, Debbie Reynolds, Ginger Rogers, Doc Severinsen, Ben Vereen, and Dionne Warwick, as well as a twenty-year association with Wayne Newton.

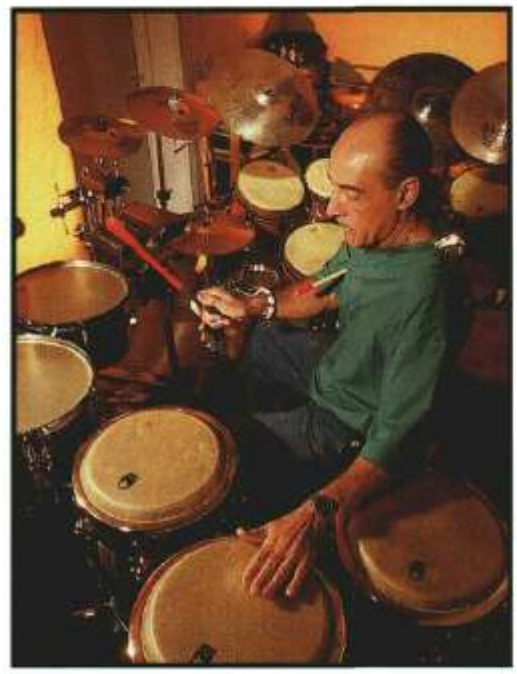
RF: When did drums enter your life?

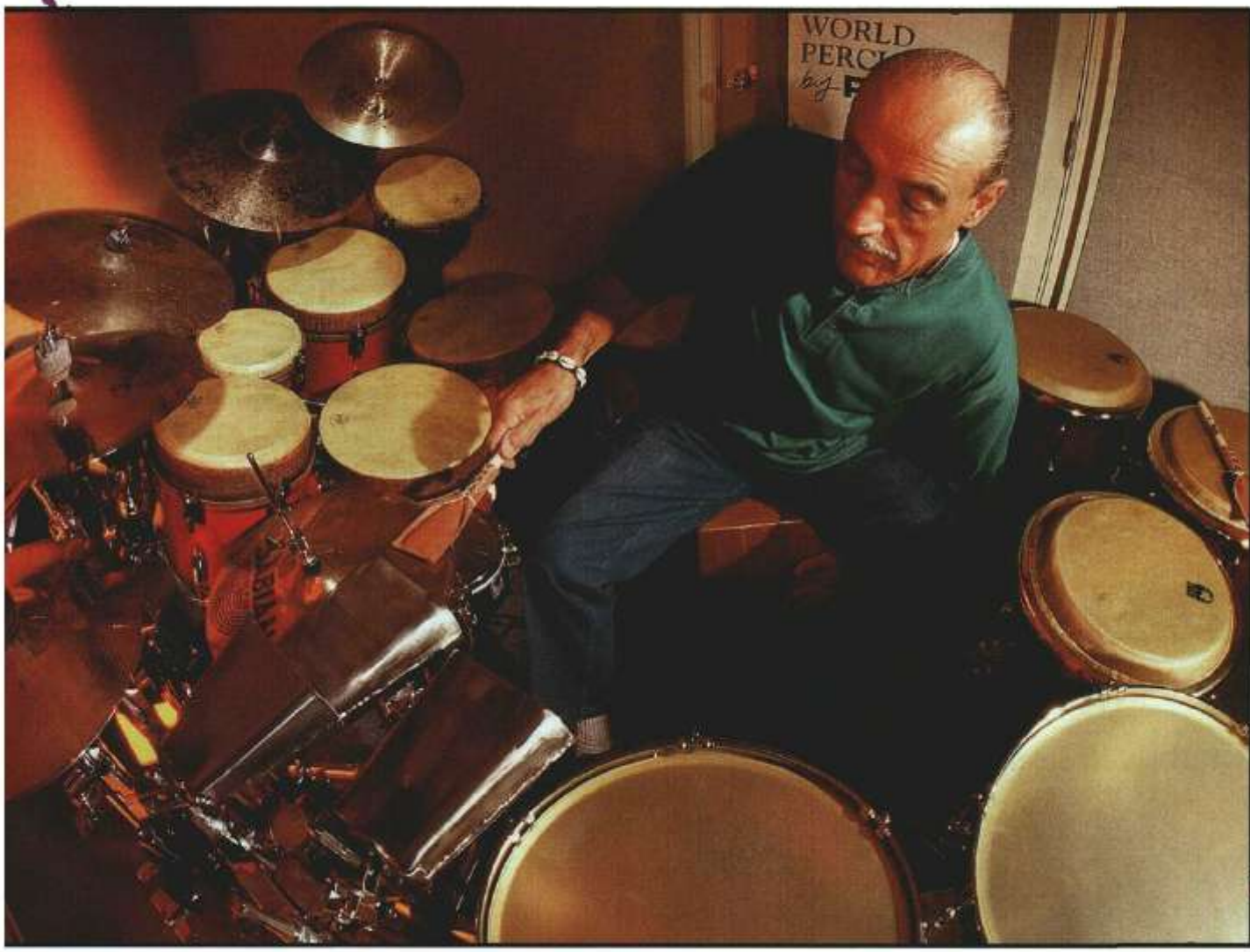
WR: I was born into a musical family. My father was a trumpet player, and all my uncles were either trumpet or trombone players. This was in Havana, Cuba, which is where I was born. Since the first day I woke up I saw instruments all around me. What got my attention was the big bass drum that was left in my living room.

My father played in Casino de la Playa, which was a very famous orchestra in Cuba in those days that featured the famous singer Miguelito Valdez. My dad—Walfredo de los Reyes II—was the first-chair trumpet player and singer. They toured the island of Cuba in a station wagon, and my father was one of the drivers. Since we had a big home, they stored all the instruments in it when they weren't playing. The set of drums actually belonged to Miguelito Valdez. Every morning I would get up and bang on the bass drum. That was my first love. I think I knew I was going to be a drummer since I was four or five years old.

RF: When did your father take you seriously?

WR: My father never wanted me to be a drummer. He always said, "Study piano because you'll make more money and you'll be a leader." All my uncles lived in the





house with us, and all I heard were trumpet and trombone scales all day long. In the meantime, I was banging on boxes and pans.

A couple of years later, in 1941, after playing with Casino de la Playa and having a lot of success, Miguelito Valdez, Anselmo Sacasas, and my father left for New York. I was seven years old. My dad went to work right away with many orchestras. When I arrived in New York City and we lived near 156th Street and Amsterdam Ave., we were the only Cubans there. I grew up in an ambience of many, many cultures. I didn't speak English at all, but I started school in the third grade. I learned English with friends, reading comic books and listening to radio shows.

I started going around to the recording sessions with my father and meeting a lot of great American players. Bebop was coming in 1943 and '44. We were in a war, and the rhythm situation changed because the drummers were getting more involved in other countries' musical ideas. Before the jet age, you couldn't just go to Brazil. I think the jet age and TV changed the whole musical world.

Later we moved to 49th street between 8th and 9th Avenues, which they called Hell's Kitchen. Moving there really opened things for me. I was twelve or thirteen years old, and I realized there was more to playing than just the bongos, congas, and timbales. I loved those instruments, but I noticed the drumset because I was always going to the theaters on Broadway and seeing Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, Max Roach, Roy Haynes, and all the great drummers. I started listening to different ways of playing.

There were also many good Puerto Rican percussionists I loved who could play the set, like Humberto Morales. He had a little bass drum and a big cymbal. In those days to see a 20" bass drum was kind of funny—they called it a bebop bass drum. It amazed me to see him play the shows. Usually they had an American drummer play the show and a Latin player

BEURRING The Lines

Walfredo Reyes Sr. has spent most of his fifty-year career fusing the drumset with traditional percussion. Here are a few vintage shots of Reyes that show some of his early experiments.

Reyes in action in 1951, performing with the Josephine Baker show at the "Teatro Enchanto" in Havana, Cuba. He was one of the first drummers to incorporate double bass in a Latin band.

From 1952 to 1955 Reyes was the staff drummer for Havana's Channel 4 TV Orchestra, which was led by the great Cuban composer Julio Gutierrez. Walfredo had to perform many different styles in this setting.

Here's Reyes at a jam session in 1960, fully incorporating timbales and congas with the drumkit.

Dig this setup: Reyes, with flutist Jose Fajardo in 1965, showing some amazing four-way coordination by playing drumkit along *with a* conga with his left hand. He has since developed this technique to a high art.

for the timbales. I wanted to do both at the same time.

RF: When you decided you wanted to play percussion and drumset, what steps did you take?

WR: I was looking at all these guys in New York who were great, like Jose Mangual from Puerto Rico and players from Cuba like Armando Peraza, the great bongo player, who was playing with George Shearing at the time, and Chano Pozo. I feel fortunate to have known and worked with all these people.

RF: But how did you learn?

WR: I started going to Cuba on my summer vacations with my mom when I was ten years old. I found out that things were different there. People were listening to jazz, plus the traditional music was there. Drummers in the United States were listening to Cuban music, but what they were getting from it was totally different.

I started getting what they were playing in Cuba because I was spending three months there and nine months in the United States. That continued until I was sixteen. I started getting into Cuban music and Cuban folklore and playing and watching the Cuban bands. Then, when I would go to New York, I would watch the jazz bands, and I started comparing.

I told my dad I wanted to take lessons, so he finally decided to teach me *solfeggio* himself. I got far enough in my private lessons to take the examination for the Music and Arts High School in New York City. There were five hundred applicants, and I was the only one who knew *solfeggio.* I was accepted, but after a couple of months I decided I wanted to be in Hell's Kitchen with my friends. I was already performing, and my dad had gotten me a drum teacher, William V. Kessler.

RF: What did he teach you?

WR: I got into drum technique and reading. I spent about three years with him, and then my next teacher was a Cuban drummer, Danny Perez, who is one of the best reading drummers I've ever met. He still teaches in Miami. Danny had studied with Henry Adler who, in those days, was the number-one teacher in New York City. In fact, Adler taught Buddy Rich. Coming in contact with Danny, my technique improved more and more. Danny taught me Henry's system—the finger technique, his approach to sticking. He saw me one day and said, "You have to change your technique," so I owe a lot to that man.

Living in New York at the time was like attending "The University of Playing." If you don't have those life experiences, all the technique you develop and study isn't going to make you a *player.* I believe that you can learn from everybody—the old people and the young people who are coming up with new ideas. You can't stay

The Real "WORED"

Walfredo Reyes Sr. was one of the first drummers to integrate Latin rhythms into drumset playing. Here are some of the albums he lists as representative of his drumming.

Artist	Album
Walfredo de los Reyes	Cuban Jazz
Walfredo de los Reyes	Wal-Pa-Ta-Ca Vol. I
Walfredo de los Reyes (with Cachao)	Wal-Pa-Ta-Ca Vol. II
Steve Winwood	Junction 7

And here are some of the records Walfredo lists as inspirations. (You'll notice this is one pioneer definitely nor living in the past.)

Artist	Album	Drummer
Wayne Shorter	Night Dream	Elvin Jones
Miles Davis	Four And More	Tony Williams
Michel Camilo	Thru My Eyes	Horacio Hernandez
Frank Emilio Flyn	Barbarisimo	Changuito
Antonio Carlos Jobim	& Friends	Alex Acuna, Harvey Mason
Los Rapines	Aniversario Encuentro 33	various
Giovanni Hidalgo	Hands Of Rhythm	Giovanni Hidalgo
Dr. N. Ramani	Lotus Signatures	Trichy Sankaran

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DRUMS Of The WORLD

Walfredo Reyes Sr.'s setup is an interesting mixture of contemporary drumset and traditional percussion. His drums are from Remo's *Mondo* series, with a 6x13 snare drum, 10", 12", 14", and 16" toms, and 16x18 and 16x20 bass drums. He also uses three Remo *Tombeks,* 8", 12", and 13".

Mounted around the kit toms are two Toca timbales and three congas, plus several cowbells from David Harvey, of Concord, California. One of the cowbells is positioned on the floor and held by a Toca bracket; Walfredo plays this with a pedal that has his signature beater attached, which is made by Regal Tip. (He also uses Regal Tip sticks, including their *5A* and *Horacio "El Negro" Hemandez* models with wood tips, as well as their timbale sticks.) Walfredo also uses a Gibraltar rack system and pedals (a double pedal on each bass drum).

Walfredo's cymbals of choice are Sabian, including a 16" *El Sabor, a* 12" *Hand Hammered* splash, a 16" *Hand Hammered* crash, a pair of 13" *AAX Studio* hi-hats, a 20" *Hand Hammered* flaw ride, and a 16" MX Chinese.

The drum throne Walfredo uses is a little bit different, too. "I use a cajon [wooden box played with hands] many times for my seat. I occasionally play it in combination with the bass drums or in different patterns."

behind.

But back in New York, I started working at the China Doll on 52nd street on Humberto Morales' drums, and the first show I played was with Billy Daniels. I was nervous. He was like a Sammy Davis in those days and made the tune "That Old Black Magic" very famous. He had very fast tunes and my hands would get tired, but after the show the conductor came and said, "Kid, you did a great job." I was fifteen years old, but I was tall, so they thought I was older. At that time I was also playing with my uncle Emilio Reyes, who was a trumpet player who had left Cuba and come to New York. Emilio has a son now who is also a great drummer, Ralph Reyes.

In 1951 my father got called to play at the Sans Souci Hotel in Havana, so we packed all our stuff and moved back to Cuba. I was seventeen and I arrived with my two bass drums. They had big, big bands for every show—I'm talking about four trumpets, two trombones, and five saxophones. It wasn't easy to fit in, because even though I was originally from Cuba, I was really from the US.

After being back in Cuba, Candido, the conga player, became a major influence because he would do a lot of stuff with independence. I would see him play three conga drums with his hands and a cowbell with his foot. Right away my mind clicked: "I can do this. I can play one hand on the conga and one hand on the cymbal."

My first call to do a show there was with Josephine Baker. I was seventeen years old, it was a big orchestra—semi-symphonic—and there I was with two bass drums. She was an amazing lady and people loved her. She was there for about a year.

In those days our show band had a rhythm section—a bongo player, a conga player, a singer, and me on drums. It was a marriage between Cuban and American music. The Cuban musicians were always listening to Bud Powell and Dizzy Gillespie; many would gather every day at someone's house to listen to the latest bebop record. Of course, I had already lived in America and had seen those musicians perform live, so people would ask me questions.

In 1954 I became the staff drummer for the Channel 4 TV orchestra in Cuba with the great Cuban composer Julio Gutierrez. We had to come in at 9:00 in the morning and rehearse to do two or three programs that night. We also had many singers who came in from Mexico. People don't realize

"Living in New York at the time was like attending 'The University of Playing.' If you don't have those life experiences, all the technique you develop and study isn't going to make you a player."

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that we had a lot of musical influence from the Mexican orchestras and with singers like Pedro Vargas, Marco Antonio Muniz, and Lucho Gatica, who would come to sing in these programs and bring incredible arrangements. There was a big band from Mexico, the Luis Arcaraz Orchestra, which was like a Glenn Miller Orchestra, with fabulous trumpet players.

The funny thing that was going on then was the Cuban Federation of Musicians and the American Federation of Musicians did not like each other. The United States did not permit Cuban orchestras to work in the United States, and Cuba didn't permit American bands to work in Cuba. To belong to Local 802 in New York, you had to have your first papers in American citizenship. In those days it was very difficult.

Finally, in 1952, they came to an agreement, and the first band to travel to Cuba was Tommy Dorsey, with Buddy Rich on drums. And where did they go? To the Sans Souci, where my father was working. That's where I met Buddy and saw him play. Then Woody Herman went to Cuba with Shelly Manne on drums. The drummers in Cuba began seeing people like

Shelly Manne and Buddy, and we were picking it up.

RF: Once you were influenced, how were you integrating it into your own playing?

WR: The TV station gig went on four or five years, and then I got a call from someone saying that they wanted to open a casino called Casino Parisien in the Hotel Nacional, which was big stuff. Eartha Kitt opened the casino. I was asked to form a

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dance orchestra, and my father led the show orchestra. So it was Walfredo de los Reyes Sr. and Walfredo de los Reyes Jr. This is where I started using a drumset in front of the band along with conga drums. I started playing drumset, congas, and timbales all by myself. I was playing congas with my left hand while playing the rest of the set. And sometimes, instead of the tom-toms, I had two timbales tilted like two toms, plus I had a 14x14 tom-tom on the floor, a little 20" bass drum, a hi-hat, and two congas.

I have recordings where you can hear me playing alone, but it sounds like two people. I did that gig until 1962, when I left Cuba because of the revolution. I was also doing a lot of the recording that was coming out of Cuba at that time. One in particular was an all-star record called *Cuban Jazz* with the famous bass player, Cachao. It's now available on CD. On that album, I play two sets of timbales *and* the drumset.

I want to make a point about multiple percussion: It's not how many things you put up there, it's how you utilize them. The current example I would like to use is Trilok Gurtu, who takes the folkloric music and combines it on the tablas and the drums. Indian players are all I am listening to now.

RF: What was the Cuban Jazz Club, which you had in the '50s?

WR: It was a bunch of guys who were all jazz buffs. We would play jam sessions every Sunday afternoon at a club called Havana 1900. Horacio Hernandez's father was actually the vice president of the club.

We brought Philly Joe Jones down there, and he didn't want to leave. He loved it. He went for one day and stayed at the Nacional Hotel for three months. He was an incredible guy and an incredible drummer, so I learned a lot from him. We would save money in the jazz club and send American jazz musicians money for their plane ticket.

RF: What made you decide to leave Cuba?

WR: I don't want to get into too much politics. But I left Cuba in 1962, because, first of all, I was an American citizen. Also, my wife had died of leukemia in 1960. When I went to New York, I remarried and we had children—Danny, Kamar, and a daughter. My wife was Puerto Rican, so eventually we all moved to Puerto Rico. I was accepted by the musicians there, who are some of the best in the world.

I made my home there for seven years and worked with those fine musicians. I owe a lot to the guys there for what I learned. It was such a little island but with so much talent. Anselmo Sacasas, the piano player who had been with my dad when I was born, was a new bandleader there, and I became his drummer. In that band I played for Eddie Fisher, Sammy Davis, Nat King Cole, Paul Anka, Sophie Tucker, Liberace. At the same time, I began to record every day, doing jingles for *Pepsi, Coke,* and *Johnson's Baby Oil.*

RF: How did you get from Puerto Rico to Las Vegas?

WR: In 1970, I was called to do a show in Las Vegas called "Latin Fire Revue," which was playing at the old Thunderbird Hotel. From there I became the house drummer for the Desert Inn Hotel for about four years. Then I was asked to join the great Don Vincent Orchestra.

RF: How did you feel about Las Vegas?

WR: Las Vegas was a trip. There were incredible orchestras with the greatest musicians in the United States. Each hotel

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had maybe thirty-five musicians. I was part of the Desert Inn Orchestra conducted by Carlton Hayes, and then I joined Don Vincent. I was Debbie Reynolds' drummer for a couple of years, and she had a new show every month. She also had one percussionist who had to play all of the mallets and timpani. There were great percussionists there, but my knowledge in congas and timbales and having the hands for that really stood out, so more and more of the acts had me playing congas. I had to play mallets too, although I'm not a percussionist on that side. I did the best I could.

One night Don Vincent, Wayne Newton's conductor, saw me play with Juliet Prowse. Her show ended with Ravel's "Bolero." After the show, Don called me over and asked if I wanted to audition for his organization at the Sands. I played his show and he said, "Okay kid, you've got the job." I became the house drummer there and played for people like Shecky Green, George Burns, Tony Bennett, Charlie Callas, and so many wonderful entertainers.

RF: Who were some of the most challenging acts to work for?

WR: When I played with Juliet Prowse it was gorgeous. She was such a lady and an incredible dancer. She did everything with so much love. The same thing with Debbie Reynolds. When I became her drummer, she needed a percussionist, so who did I get? [Walfredo] Junior. And that's how he started. Debbie used to call him Frito Bandito, because she couldn't pronounce the Walfredo thing.

RF: Was anybody difficult to work for?

WR: There are a lot of stories I could tell you. When Jack Carter came to town, every drummer was nervous. If he wanted something and you didn't give it to him—like the right rimshot when he wanted it—there was a meeting after the show. Jackie Leonard would curse at you right on stage. Another one, incredibly notorious, was Milton Berle—Uncle Milty—although I loved the guy.

RF: Was there anyone who was very difficult from a musical standpoint?

WR: I think all the shows in Vegas were challenging. I did many of the big productions as well. In those days, Vegas was the musical capital of the world. But it went down the drain around '93. The corporations came in with the computers, and the strike happened. We were saying, "We want this and that," and I think it got out of hand in both camps. The acts don't use orchestras anymore and we also don't have acts who use big bands. The young generation is missing out. So much is electronics. That's why Latin music is so popular—it's still free.

RF: So what did you do when Las Vegas began changing?

WR: Wayne [Newton] decided to start traveling. When he asked me if I wanted to go on the road, I wasn't overjoyed because of my kids and all that. I always liked to stay in one place, but you have to make a living. I was with him from '83 to '93, but I finally quit when Wayne went to Branson, Missouri. I got remarried at that time and moved to Concord, California. I figured it was time for me to go on with my life, which I am glad about.

But Wayne was a really good guy. He was the best man at my wedding. He even tried to mediate between the hotels and the musician's union during the strike. We had some incredible experiences together, like going to the Persian Gulf on those USO tours.

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RF: What were those like?

WR: This was during the Gulf War *before* Bob Hope went over. Like Wayne says, we were sent to check things out first. It was incredible. It was the most wonderful thing to see these young people on those ships actually fighting for their country and democracy. I was on the battleships Missouri and New Jersey, and we were greeted with a red carpet by the Navy.

RF: Was it scary?

WR: It *was.* The military was on red alert. I brought back about thirty letters from sailors and Marines to their mothers, and I called several of them. When I would get one of the mothers on the phone I would say, "I just saw your son," and I could hear crying. It was amazing.

RF: You were obviously a great influence on *your* children.

WR: Out of my six children, two are drummers and one is an actor. All of my children are great, but we're talking about music here.

RF: Did you want your children to go into music?

WR: In my house in Las Vegas, I had the greatest drummers come and play, like Alex Acuna, Louie Bellson, and Luis Conte. My sons Junior and Danny were around, watching us playing. We would jam all day. Then I would take Junior to work with me and he'd see rehearsals, so I guess I was an influence. As far as my sitting down and teaching them, I said no way—I would not do that. A father can't teach a son. I went through that with my dad—we were always fighting—and I didn't want to get into that with my children. So I taught them a little and insisted they study with good teachers. They have their own way. They're not me.

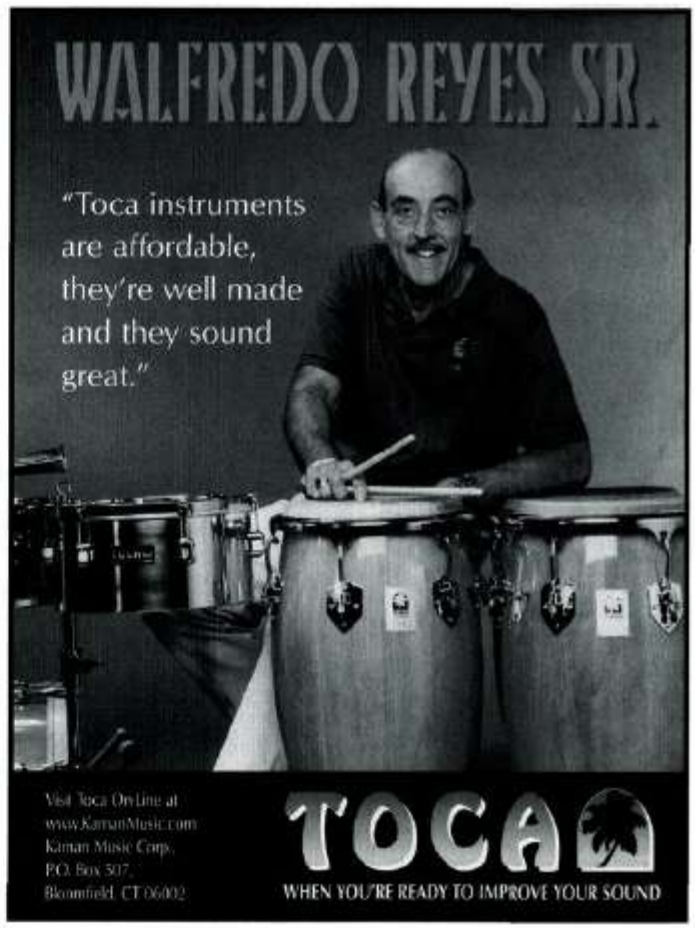
Danny sat down on the drums one day and just took off. I remember Alex [Acuna] was with me in the living room and we heard this drummer and he said, "Who's that?" We went to the garage and there was Danny, seven years old, on the drums, and he was playing a rhythm that was amazing. I want my kids to be whatever they want to be. My other son, Kamar, also took off on percussion, but he wants to be an actor.

I must say, though, that the people you associate with in life are very important. I think one of the influences in my kids' lives is Louie Bellson, because they hung around him constantly. I look at him and think, that's the way a drummer should be. Not only is he one of the greatest drummers in the world, he is a great human being. When you associate with good people, not only as players but as human beings, it rubs off. That has always been my luck.

RF: What kinds of things have you done since moving to the Bay area?

WR: I have done some movie soundtracks—like *Mambo Kings* with Linda Ronstadt and *Predator II*—and some recordings, like Steve Winwood's *Junction 7,* where I worked along with Junior and Danny. I have been working with some of the local musicians, too, such as the great percussionist from Cuba, Orestes Vilato. Recently he and I did some clinics for Sabian cymbals.

Lately I've mostly been doing clinics for Remo, on their *Mondo* kit, which is a very refreshing idea for the drummer-percussionist. It uses drumheads made out of a special material that is stronger and harder. The set can be played with sticks and hands, like percussion, which is right down my alley. I use Toca percussion in conjunc-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tion with the *Mondo* kit. I also do clinics for Toca, Gibraltar, and Regal Tip. Currently, I'm planning my next video.

RF: How old are you?

WR: I'm going to be sixty-four, but I feel like I'm thirty-two. I keep up with the young people, and I appreciate them. Older musicians tend to put up barriers, thinking that what the younger musicians are doing isn't as valid as what was done years ago. I listen to everything. I play with young kids and try to get involved, but without losing my foundation, my past. You shouldn't lose your heritage.

If you are born with the gift of rhythm—that inner way of communicating with people that we percussion players have—I feel an aura. There is no color barrier. When we start playing it doesn't matter if we're Indian, Brazilian, Cuban, or American Indian—it's communication. The first beat was our mother's heart. People communicated with drums before there were words. I could get on a drumset or a conga and go to Africa, to a hostile tribe, and we could communicate and become friends. Rhythm creates unity.

RF: What advice would you give to younger players?

WR: My message to young people would be to have them listen to everybody, hear everybody, love everybody—young and old. People often ask me what I think about Cuban music today compared to the older music. To me, Cuban music is Cuban music. It's like a baseball game with different players. It's being played by a younger generation with new ideas, and you have to give the young generation a chance. There are great young players out there with many ideas. And you have to respect everybody's ideas.

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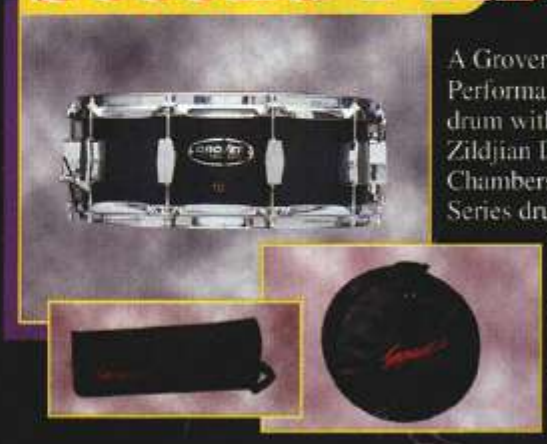

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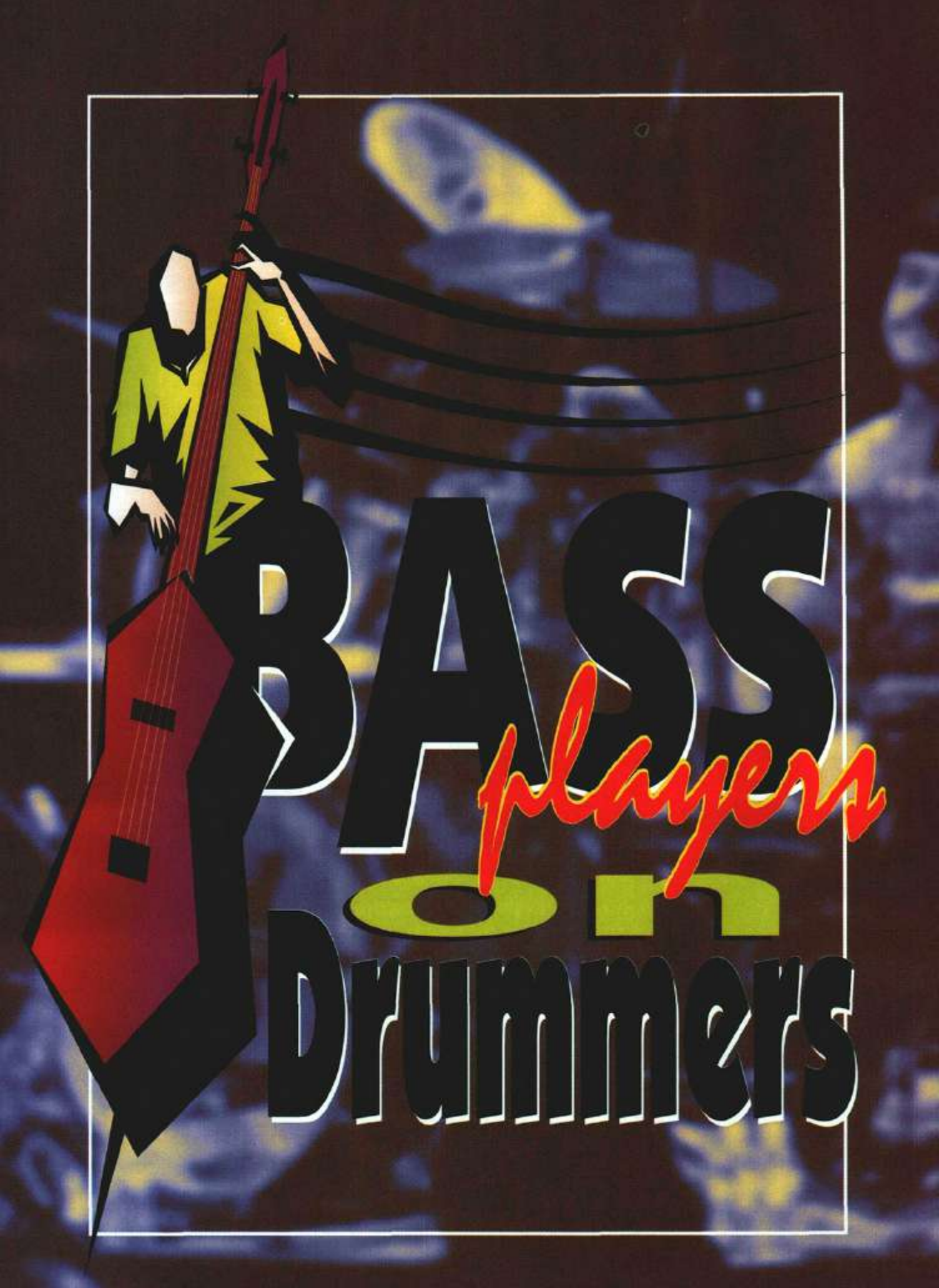
BASS
players
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Drummers

THEY SAID WHAT?!

by T. Bruce Wittet

In a perfect world, if the drummer were to get tangled in some intricate fill, the bass player would be right there laying down quarter notes until things resolved. Similarly, if the bass player were to soar off with some ambitious popping and slapping, the drummer wouldn't shadow every move, but rather lay down a firm backbeat. Both would know that home was close by. And any time one or the other desired to make a fanciful excursion, a nod or a body movement would suffice to signal the intent. Their trust would be implicit.

It seems obvious that we build trust by listening. On the bandstand, most communication is nonverbal, simply because a musical performance is not an appropriate occasion to chatter. There are exceptions, like Buddy Rich, who, as we will read, kept a running dialog with his bass player. Most of us, though, wait until we get off stage and let off steam in forums like *Modern Drummer,* where we give equal time to divergent musical views and hope to become more well-rounded musicians.

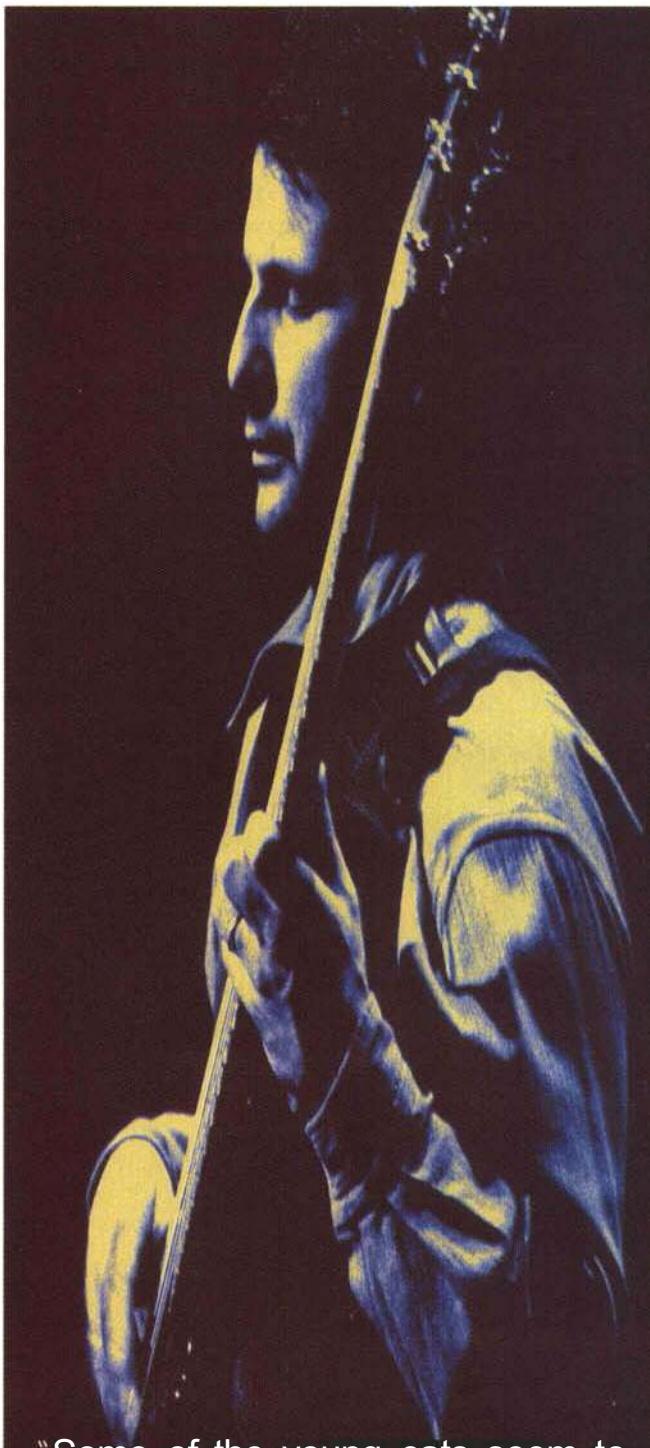
But sometimes it's a little like preaching to the converted. Sometimes it takes a different perspective to steer us right—the vantage point of someone *else* who has a stake in the matter.

To this end, *MD* contacted half a dozen prominent bass players representing a number of styles and several generations. They spoke with wit and reverence about the drummers in their lives; they offered anecdotes and analysis about the interplay between bass and drums. Hopefully some phrase will stick with you, like the following dry observations uttered years ago in these pages by California session bassist Carol Kaye: "Drummers have their fills at the end of eight bars. They usually rush. I'll go with them a bit. They then usually drag when they get through with their fills, and I'll play on top of the beat to smooth it over."

Kaye's words hit at least one young drummer like a bolt of lightning. What a revelation: By focusing on our roles and tendencies—and on those of our bandmates—our respective jobs become easier, the music flows better, and our performances become happy memories. And because of this, people will want to play with us. The phone will ring. So belated thanks, Carol, for your candor.

A very special note of appreciation goes to Milt Hinton, legendary session bassist who, since the 1930s, has gigged with every drummer from Buddy to Zutty. Milt agreed to an interview, despite a serious bout of ill health and—adding insult to injury—a round of major dental surgery, making speech laborious. His photo diary, *Bass Lines,* was a major inspiration for this article. Milt survived the transitions from swing to bop to rock. Now he is again defying the odds: He turns eighty-eight this year.

So sit back and let the bassists talk while we remain silent. After all, if we can't trust them, who *can* we trust?



"Some of the young cats seem to be polarized and more specialized. They're either into the 4/4 jazz thing or the funk, straight-8th thing, As a bandleader, if you need a drummer to do both, the list gets pretty short."—**John Patitucci**

DAVE BRONZE

Dave Bronze has seen drummers come and go. Touring and recording with Eric Clapton since 1993, he appeared with Jim Keltner on the blues testimonial CD *From The Cradle,* and is in the current Clapton lineup, which includes Steve Gadd and Joe Sample. When not backing Slowhand, Dave plays on London sessions, and with Mike & the Mechanics/Squeeze keyboardist/singer Paul Carrack. According to Dave, he is a "big fan of bass as bass, not too much fancy stuff." Bronze also insists that he is "anti-slap at the moment—strong fundamental, not too much treble. I like to be down there with the kick drum.

"I played with Henry Spinetti for a long time," Bronze says. "To me, he's got the best pocket of any British drummer. Dave Mattacks is good at that as well; he's got a pretty light touch, but he makes it sound loud.

"If someone had asked me five years ago to write out a list of my favorite drummers, it would have read something like this, although not necessarily in this order: Richie Hayward, Jim Keltner, Steve Gadd, Andy Newmark—in fact, all drummers who have come through Eric Clapton's band! I've learned from all of them.

"Richie was a huge influence on me in the early days," says Bronze. "Because I was well-versed in his playing—I had played in bands that did Little Feat music—it was pretty easy to fit in with him. But, as always, there is a certain adaptation to be done. He put it *behind* the beat.

"Jim Keltner—definitely a unique approach to the instrument. It kind of reminds me of the Beverly Hillbillies—you know, the pictures of that old truck with Granny sitting on top and all the sauce pans hanging off the side. When you watch Jim creating in the studio, he sits there, scratches his head, looks around, rummages through his boxes, and comes up with funny little cymbals and drums. He then bolts this stuff around his kit until he comes up with a sound that's right. On one of the tracks we did, he had three or four pairs of maracas duct-taped to his arms while holding a pair of maracas in one hand and a tambourine in the other! When you listen to the album you think that stuff was overdubbed, but it wasn't.

"Jim doesn't subscribe to the idea that the drummer is always responsible for keeping time," Bronze continues. "It is the *collective* responsibility. That guy plays around with time more than anyone else I've ever played with. He bends it around and is very creative, but it always feels right.

"Andy Newmark [who also played on *From The Cradle]* comes from a completely different angle; I think he'd be the first to say that he's not a blues aficionado. He brought his own thing to it, which was quite different.

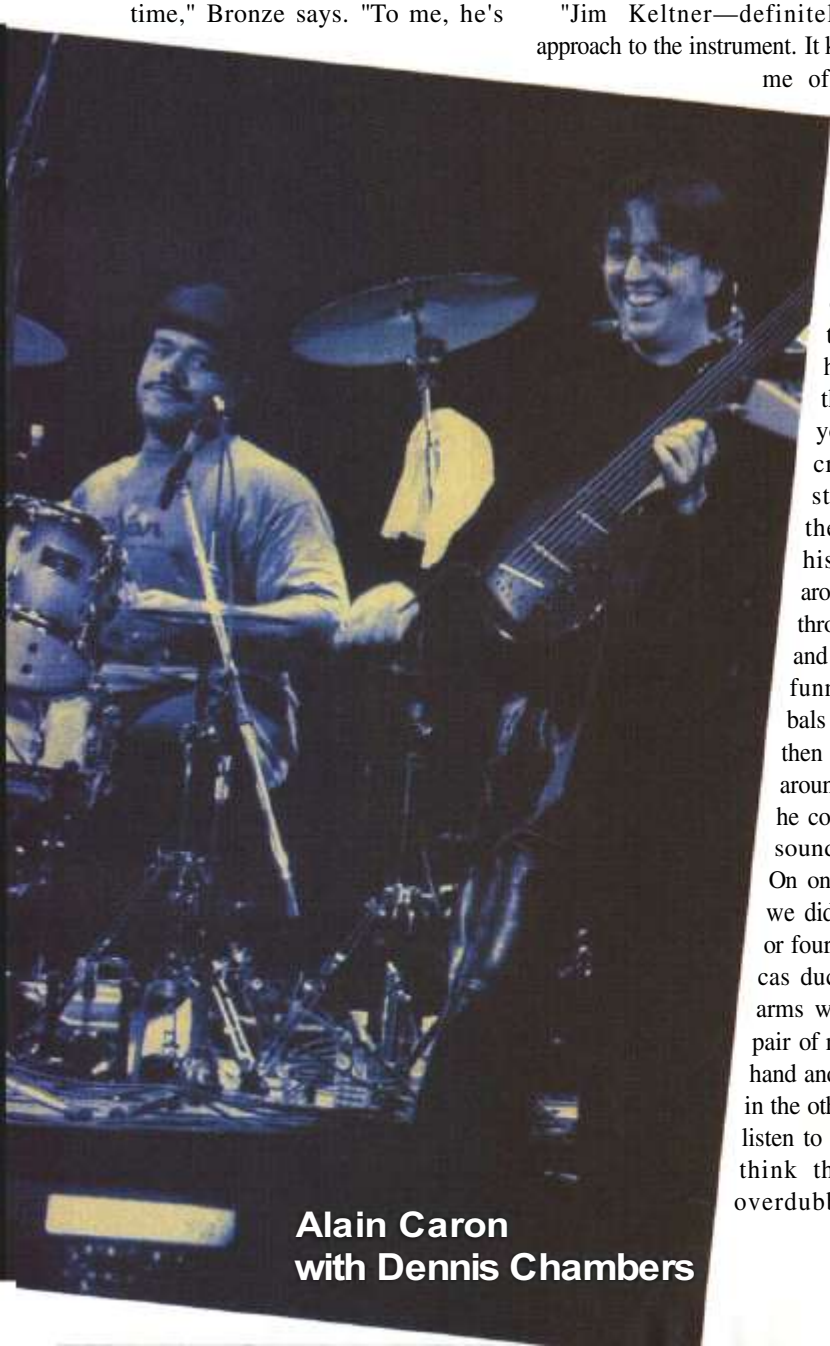
"I believe Steve Gadd was first brought in to do a stint with Clapton at the Albert Hall. That was quite a humbling experience. I remember driving to the rehearsal thinking, 'God, I'm going to meet Steve Gadd. How am I going to cope?' But he's a real sweetheart. We get on great personally and musically.

"With Steve, you have to make accommodations, because he's very authoritative about where he puts the beat. I'll defer to him, to be honest with you; I'm not going to say, *'This* is where it is' and plunk away. I'm going to go with Steve, because I trust him.

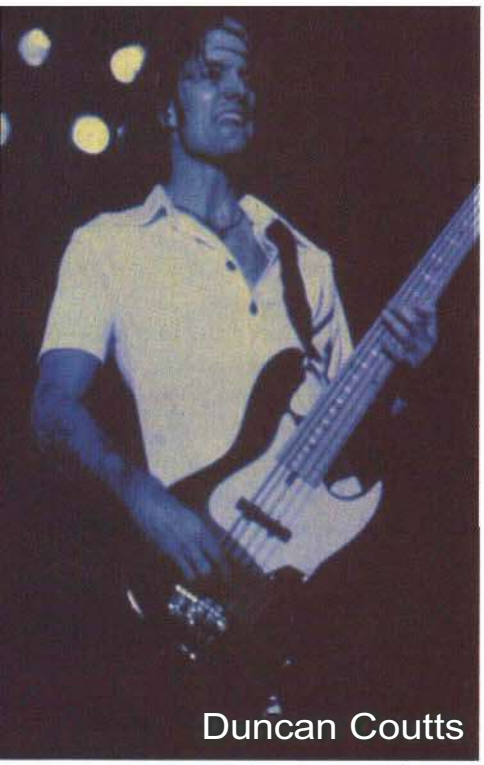
"When playing with Steve, I don't have to look at him to make sure we come down at the same time—ever. I actually play with my eyes closed a lot of the time anyway, and it's never been a problem. We count from 1 to 4 at the same speed, which is nice."

On synchronizing each bass note with the kick drum, Dave offers, "It depends on the track. In some cases, I love it really straight, sort of nailing every note with every bass drum hit. When it's working, it's a great thing to sit on and let everybody else soar away. Other times it's not appropriate, like in blues stuff."

Dave has strong opinions about timekeeping. "You have to be sure of your own time. I confess that for many years I wasn't. I'm the kind of guy who, if things are not locking well, I blame myself—at least I was until the days when everybody was using clicks and drum machines and I was getting calls to overdub bass parts. I found my time was good and I never had any problem: 'Hang on, it can't be *me,* then!' You have to go in knowing your sense of time is within reasonable limits, and then let it go from there.



Alain Caron with Dennis Chambers



"The last five years I've been playing with so many good drummers, I haven't got any of memory of playing with bad ones! You get the odd occasion when the drummer is not up to it. In general, young drummers tend to play too much. And when it's not happening, it makes me feel that I'm not doing *my* job properly, and that's an unsettling experience."

WILL LEE

You know Will Lee as a member of the David Letterman house band. He has an uncanny ability to anchor the time while allowing it to flow in directions dictated by various guest artists. A fixture on the New York session scene on bass, you can also hear him sing once in a while on jingles. And while Will can slap a fast run or two on bass, he likes to lay back: "The only time I *don't* rush is when I'm playing." Will's first instrument was drums.

"The Beatles' appearance on the *Ed Sullivan Show* was the thing that got me," Will recalls. "I was an eleven- or twelve-year-old drummer with a set of WFL and Leedy drums, which had been sitting in my bedroom for six years. Once I saw close-ups of these extremely successful musicians playing to women who were completely losing it over them, I was hooked. Plus we saw close-ups of Ringo playing—everybody learned something about playing right there! It was a great wake-up call all the way around."

How about the common criticism that the Beatles' time was all over the place? *"The feel* wasn't all over the place," Will states emphatically. "Time is something you can measure with a metronome. So what? Did it say anything to you as a piece of music?

"I played with Ringo on one of his solo albums and at the Royal Albert Hall with George Harrison. All I could think about was what this cool guy was going to do, and he played the same incredible stuff he did way back then.

"Buddy Rich was funny because he had this incredible attitude. We were doing this session and I was sitting in a chair thinking to myself, 'I want to get the hell *out* of this session; I don't want to shine or do *anything* memorable; I just want to leave! I'm not going to play anything except roots and get out of here.' The way Buddy was treating people was bad. The percussionist's name was Crusher Bennett, but Buddy refused to call him anything but 'Bruiser': 'Ah...Sir, my name is Crusher.' 'Great, okay, *Bruiser,* when we get to the bridge, do this....' And Buddy's performance was kind of corny because he was playing a rock tune."

Will also played with another heavyweight, Billy Cobham. "Early on in my career I had come up from Miami to audition for Billy's band, Dreams. I knew the material but I didn't know what a dream it would be to play with a drummer who was so secure that I didn't have to think about being the timekeeper. All I had to do was *play.* What a great concept! The time? Whether the time was great or not, it didn't matter. It was something you couldn't argue with because Billy *meant* every note he played."

And what about Will's former Letterman rhythm-section partner, Steve Jordan? "Well, there's the old Steve Jordan—the younger Steve Jordan—who used to do his fair share of speeding up the track. Eventually Steve started to discover groove. He was always very cocky whether he was playing well or not."

Will has also done a lot of work with

"I just finished recording a new duo album with Bill Bruford. On one tune he played in 3/4, in 7/8, in 12/8, in a slow 4/4 with a different downbeat—he played everywhere, places where no one else would ever have thought of."-**Tony Levin**

Steve Gadd over the years. "With Steve, oh man, it's a totally easy relationship. I always compare Steve's musicianship to [bassist] Anthony Jackson's, a musician who knows the value of a hundred 8th notes but also of a couple of tied whole notes. Steve is one of those guys who, no matter how big that space is between notes, you *know* where that foot is going to land—it will be right where you want it to be."

Hearing the aforementioned Carol Kaye quote about drummers speeding up during fills, and then hearing Rick Marotta's name, Will offers: "Rick Marotta is the opposite of that quote. He practically *slows down* during a fill! He's sort of like...you know when you're driving your car and your parking break is on?"

Will also worked with Muscle Shoals veteran Roger Hawkins. "Once I decided that he and I were going to make it to the end of the song—if I just hung in there with him—it was alright. It took me a while to get into that trust thing with him: I had never played with a guy who felt that laid-back, especially with the backbeat.

"I made the mistake of bringing a date to the session. I looked to the other side of the glass, and I could see her mouthing the words, 'You're rushing!' How's that for building confidence? That was our last date. I *wasn't* rushing. It was just that Roger's time was so far back there, it made everybody *feel* like they were rushing. However, when you get back into the control room—and this is true with a lot of players—his drumming just sounds like magic."

On the state of drummers today, Will has a positive vibe: "There aren't many *bad* drummers anymore. The competition is too great. When I came up, there were a lot of lousy drummers, and I got used to being the timekeeper. Nobody should have to have that responsibility."

ALAIN CARON

Not long ago Alain Caron made the cover of *Bass Player* magazine. He is a frequent poll winner, cited for his fluid, articulate style. A fusion bassist with the Quebec band UZEB, he now alternates between living and working in New York, Montreal, and Europe.

"It's very rare to find a drummer whose internal clock stays consistent throughout a performance," he says. "Dennis Chambers can play totally freely, but his clock is impeccable. Some drummers play a groove and it's perfect, but then they do a fill, and—whoops!—the time shifts a little. Not with Dennis.

"Some drummers' styles don't necessarily fit yours," Alain adds. "The better a drummer is, the easier he is to play with. More and more modern musicians are able to play different styles, whereas a few years ago you had to be a specialist. But no matter what style you play, the first quality of a drummer should be the clock.

"I studied Cuban rhythms to be able to fit with the drums. Recently I played a gig with Alex Acuna in Germany, and I'll tell

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you, when Alex starts a beat, it's not funk! It's something else, and it's great. Alex Acunia is an amazing drummer because of that. He knows all the rhythms, and there are *rules* to those rhythms that state why the conga player is playing this, why the bongo player is playing that. It makes a unit. If one member doesn't play the right part, the structure falls apart—just like in jazz, where the hi-hat is on 2 and 4 and the bass player is walking.

"I think there's too much of a big thing about playing behind or ahead of the beat. I think that could all be bullshit. I listen to a drummer and I play with him and try to fit with him. I listen to some tapes I do with different drummers, and I play differently. I know that my tendency is to push it a little, but as I get older my playing is more relaxed.

"Why do you get along great with some people and not others? It's the same with bass players and drummers. After seventeen years of playing with Paul Brochu, we just close our eyes and it's there. It was hard to find a drummer for UZEB who could play really open and strong at the same time, *and* with a good personality you could hang with. And Paul is one of those guys with a clock. Through the tune, even if it may speed up somewhere, it's always connected.

"David Garibaldi did the tour with my band last fall. He's amazing. He's got a pocket. You count off the tune, and the next 1 is right on, and it stays there until the end of the tune."

Who are some of the other players Alain enjoys? "I played with Terry Clarke. He's one of my favorite jazz drummers. The Jim Hall trio with him and bassist Don Thompson is one of the best jazz trios I've ever heard, right up there with Bill Evans, Paul Motian, and Scott LaFaro. And Peter Erskine—a very strong drummer. You don't mess around with Erskine; he's strong yet so fluid."

TONY LEVIN

An innovator on bass guitar, upright bass, three-string bass, Chapman Stick, and coiffure (he shaved his head long before it was fashionable), Tony Levin is widely applauded for his tenure with Peter Gabriel and King Crimson. Originally a classical musician, he burst onto the New York session scene with another Rochester native, Steve Gadd, in the early 1970s. Tony describes his approach as "intuitive."

"I've been very lucky to play with a lot of excellent drummers, and there's a big difference in their feels. But I don't really compare them qualitatively. I just enjoy the experience each time.

"I've just finished tracks for an album with Vinnie Colaiuta. Being an American drummer, his focus on laying down the time is paramount, which I've found is less the case with British drummers. In my opinion, Vinnie will usually play the time in a way that's easy to join in on, and he occasionally does little things in his part for variety, which lets me either be the solid guy sticking to the steady part, letting him do the flourishes—or I can stray a bit, and I know he'll hold things down.

"Manu Katche, with whom I've done lots of albums, is always doing flourishes and finding new ways to approach a stan-

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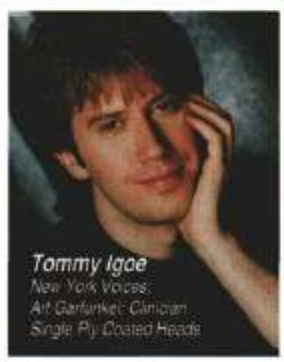

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dard beat. I usually feel it's best for me to stick to a steady part when playing with Manu, enjoying the surprises he'll add. Sometimes, when he feels it's right, he'll move way up on top of the beat. Live, I kind of plod behind the beat, not going with him. But if we're recording, I'll try to stick with him. Live, it's often difficult to stay tight with him because I'm busy doing a dance step with Peter Gabriel or I'm *so* far away from him, with a radio transmitter on the bass!

"Steve Gadd was sort of my teacher years ago—sticking with me through some shakey times as I converted from a classical player to a jazz bassist, and then to a rock player. [Check Tony's Web site at www.papabear.com/tlev.htm for an essay on that subject.] When I started with Steve I didn't even understand the concept of playing on top of the beat. And back in those days, Steve did play a lot on top. Later we both moved to New York City, and he listened to Rick Marotta laying back on the beat, and picked up that technique.

"I had an easy time—still do—playing with Rick, since my tendency is to lay back anyway. I've also done a great deal of playing with Jerry Marotta. He plays unusual parts, but usually with a very heavy backbeat, which lets me either enjoy being the downbeat guy or coming up with some offbeat parts.

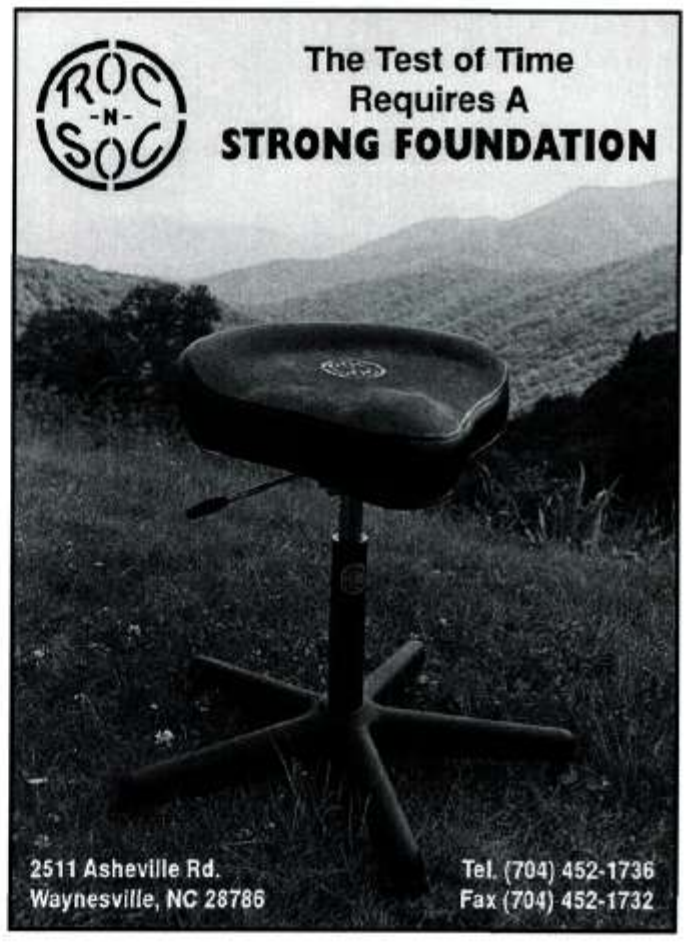
"I had the pleasure of working with Buddy Rich for a couple of weeks, though he did fire the whole band on one of those days—and hired them back the next. Buddy played with an incredible intensity, often way on top of the beat. You know how he looked while playing, head always turned to the side? That's because he constantly talked to the bass player. Here's what he was saying: 'You're dragging!' Amazingly to me, when he felt like impressing someone, he could maintain that extraordinary intensity without rushing. That experience, which lasted a set or two of the short time I was with him, is still a great memory for me."

About Bill Bruford: "Creative to the max—you never know how he'll react to what's going on. A perfect example: I just finished recording a new duo album with him. On one tune Bill played in 3/4, in 7/8, in 12/8, in a slow 4/4 with a different downbeat—he played *everywhere,* places where no one else would ever have thought of.

"I could go through a long list of other drummers: Steve Ferrone—playing the beat as solid as possible, leaving plenty of room for the whole band to go wherever they like. Keltner—again, solid, but with a distinctive feel that makes you think you don't even need a vocal there to have a great record. Richie Hayward—totally original parts and unique feel, an honor to join in with. Bozzio—his kit alone lets you know you're in for a new experience!"

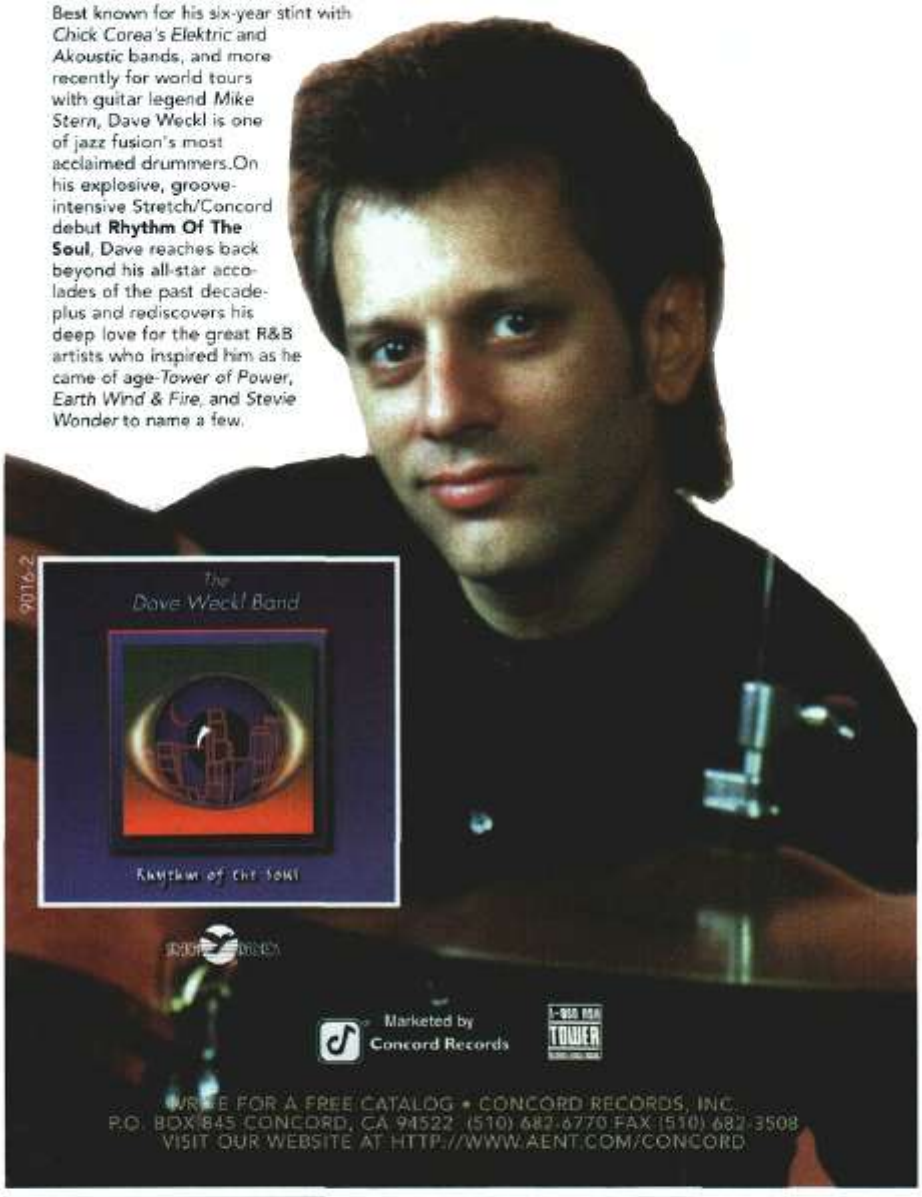
Tony has a definite opinion about drummers and playing time. "Any drummer needs to cover the function of playing time well. The other factors—originality, creativity, technique—follow along *after* playing time. Any bass player will tell you the same thing. It's a bit sad to run into a drummer who's so focused on his fills, or how fast he can play, that he's neglected to learn how to play time—leaving the band in the lurch.

"Please don't think that since I'm commenting on drummers' tendencies I think



The Dave Weckl Band
Rhythm Of The Soul

Best known for his six-year stint with *Chick Corea's Elektric* and *Akoustic* bands, and more recently for world tours with guitar legend *Mike Stern*, Dave Weckl is one of jazz fusion's most acclaimed drummers. On his explosive, groove-intensive Stretch/Concord debut **Rhythm Of The Soul**, Dave reaches back beyond his all-star accolades of the past decade-plus and rediscovers his deep love for the great R&B artists who inspired him as he came of age-*Tower of Power*, *Earth Wind & Fire*, and *Stevie Wonder* to name a few.



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that bassists, including me, are any more on the mark. I struggle, like most players, to do my best, to keep up with the quality of the musicians around me, to learn, to improve, and to have fun with the music."

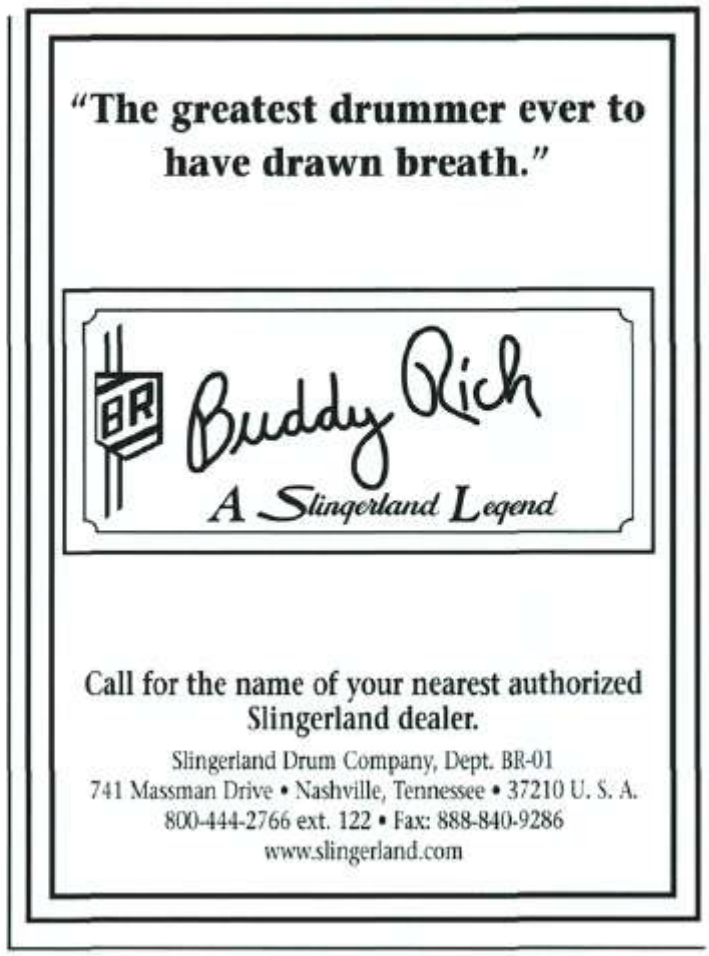
DUNCAN COUTTS

Duncan Coutts is the rock-solid bassist with Our Lady Peace, his first successful band. Duncan's partner in the rhythm section is drummer Jeremy Taggart. "I auditioned for them and went on the road right away," Duncan says. "It took a while for me to get up to road speed, since they had done four hundred shows at that point. But playing with Jeremy is just a neat thing. He likes to *lay* with the bass and encourages me to do stuff with him."

That begs the question, should a drummer and bass player always lock into every note? "It's nice as long as we're very aware of what each other is doing. That's one thing Arnold [Lani, OLP producer] drilled into my head. It evolved to a point where we could move off to do fills and stuff, as long as we knew what each other was doing.

"Jeremy puts in odd-time fills and odd-feeling things, accentuating certain notes in a bar that I don't feel. I've *listened* to that, but never played with people who play that way.

"All of our tempos fluctuate slightly live, so we constantly listen to each other. It should be easy to play with a drummer in the sense that he is aware of what the bassist is doing, but not in the sense that he's going to sit back and not challenge the bass player. As much as we play pretty much like the record, as a rhythm section we feel we can add our own little things."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JOHN PATITUCCI

John is another poll-winning session bassist who gets accolades for his sleek, fusion stylings and his adaptability. You name the rhythm section, he can hang with it. Proof: He flawlessly accompanied Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez at last year's MD Drum Festival.

"I've been fortunate to play with a lot of different kinds of drummers," Patitucci states. "Everybody has a unique voice when they get to that high a level. I've had a chance to play with Jack DeJohnette and Tony Williams a little—not enough, though.

"I notice that if I was sensitive about it and was loose and not too rigid, I could really have a lot of fun and enjoy the different stylistic preferences each drummer has. Some drummers play wide-open, like Paul Motian, who I used on my latest record—big beat with an interesting 'painting' concept. Obviously, I've played with guys who are more dense, like Jack, Dave Weckl, Tony, Gary Novak, Vinnie Colaiuta—guys who have ways of filling up the sound—and drummers like Al Foster, who kind of paint broad strokes but who can also get some density happening. Peter Erskine, though, is someone who can play different ways.

"I did some Ry Cooder things with Jim Keltner, and I always felt he was the Elvin Jones of rock N roll; he started off wanting to be Billy Higgins or Elvin Jones and has a real heart for jazz, which you can hear when he's playing rock. He has a big wide beat like those guys, and he plays things that are unusual. It's not a stock drum part. Same with Gadd.

"I'm pretty malleable, so I don't think that any of them are hard to play with. It's a function of how rigid you are. As a bass player you can't afford to be that rigid or you'll miss out on a lot of incredible styles of drumming. Paul Motian plays nothing like Jack DeJohnette or Tony, but he's equally valid. Steve Gadd has a different voice from Vinnie Colaiuta or Dave Weckl, although they were both influenced by Gadd. Tony influenced Vinnie as well as Gadd. It's an evolutionary extension of the line.

"It's interesting that some of the younger cats are getting in touch with older jazz guys like Art Blakey and Philly Joe. There are great players like Brian Blade, Herlin Riley, and Bill Stewart following that line with a great feel and very fresh approach.

"Some of the young cats seem to be polarized, though—more specialized. They're either into the 4/4 jazz thing or the funk, straight-8th thing. As a bandleader, if you need a drummer to do both, the list gets short.

"Time, feel, and consistency are always going to be important. *Everybody* in the band keeps the time. If the other players are leaning on the bass player and the drummer and not playing time, then the music suffers. Everybody has to play strong time. Everybody should be able to play by themselves and generate the time. It takes a while for younger players to get that together.

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"A lot of times it's difficult for drummers to play with intensity but not play too loud. I think we still have a ways to go on that one, just because it's such a hard thing to do. If you listen to Roy Haynes or Al Foster, they can play quiet and really burn, whereas sometimes a younger cat hasn't developed that touch."

MILT HINTON

Milt carried a camera on his journeys around the world, documenting the jazz life since the 1930s. "My thought was that photographers take pictures of musicians the way they see us," Milt explains, "but they don't see us like *we* do. I wanted to take pictures that they wouldn't take because it didn't mean anything to them: a guy sleeping on a bus, or things we do that we get some kicks out of—or musicians listening to a playback, where you can almost hear the music because they're so deeply engrossed in what they've just recorded."

Milt worked with many of the greatest drummers and in many different situations. But which was his favorite? "We had a rhythm section called the New York Rhythm Section with Hank Jones, Barry Galbraith, Osie Johnson, and me. We did a million things together." Given Milt's love for Papa Jo Jones, why wasn't he involved? "Jo didn't read well enough. He didn't have the discipline in a couple of places. Osie could read, and he could play anything. Jo Jones wasn't interested in doing all the things that we did, playing any kind of music, so we called Osie.

"But Papa Jo Jones was the greatest drummer I ever played with. He played like a violin player: He didn't *hit* with his sticks—he wouldn't hit heavy—he'd hit once and the stick would *bounce* the second time. So he got an easier, softer sound that kept the rhythm going. He was so much a drummer—a real *man.* I researched him: He went all over the country as a boy, tap dancing with his father down in New Orleans. He wasn't interested in money; he was interested in playing the way he wanted to play.

"One record that I think is a perfect example of what drums should sound like is *Jo Jones Plus Two,* recorded by some guy at a little studio on Long Island. I never heard a drum sound like that. Of course the drummer has to get a good sound in the first place; then, it's the microphones. Jo's sound blended with the bass, although I can't explain it. His snares were so crisp, and his cymbals were soft.

"I listened to some records recently that I played on with Cab Calloway's band. There was only one mic' hanging in the hall, but my bass is very clear on those dates—and the drums. We made our *own* dynamics, you know?"

On making the transition from swing to bebop, Milt offers, "If you look at all the drummers and bass players with the big bands who also tried to work with small bands, you'll see that not too many could make the transition. I was one of the only ones who successfully came from the big bands and went to the small bands, because I was trying to listen and get in with the players."

On adjusting his playing to suit each drummer, Hinton says: "Yes, you had to do that, because some drummers played on top of the beat and some played right on the beat. I played with Buddy Rich and I played with Gene Krupa, and it was just a completely different thing. Gene was not nearly as on top of the beat as Buddy was. The drums sounded different, too.

"Buddy used to depend on me to get him bass players. He used to say to me: 'Hell, man, send me a young bass player.' I said, 'You *killed* the last two I sent you!'

"Some drummers were too loud. The good guys would soften down and bring it up. I made records with Art Blakey and Buddy DeFranco. You had to dig in a little more with Art because he was heavy-handed.

"Shelly Manne was a fine musician. He knew how to play well with anybody, and he would listen. I would consider his time right on the beat. I played with him in Japan some years ago with Teddy Wilson. That was one of the nicest experiences I can remember. We did a tour in Europe, too.

"I played with Steve Gadd when he started out. Harry Lim had a record company, and he was the one who brought Steve Gadd up. I've been lucky enough to play with a tremendous number of drummers. I made a list of all the drummers I played with once, and it went back to Kaiser Marshall and Baby Dodds. I got started with Zutty [Singleton]—New Orleans jazz,

"I was always interested in playing with good guys. I loved to play and I got along with everybody, so consequently everybody would let me play with them."

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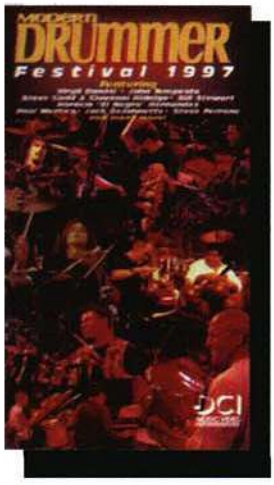

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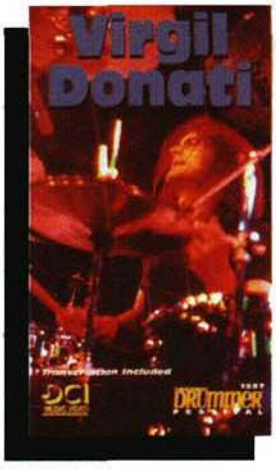

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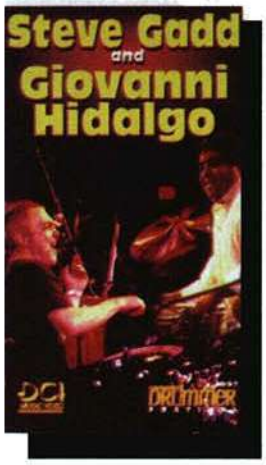

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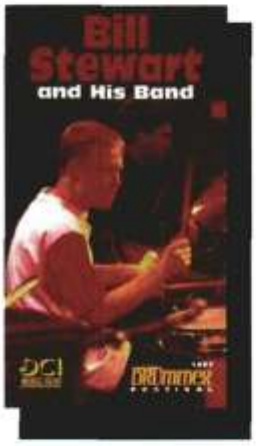

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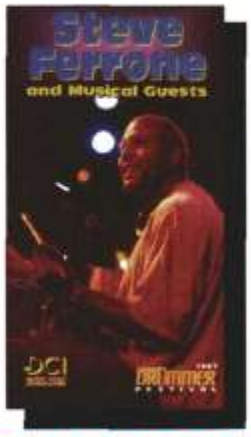

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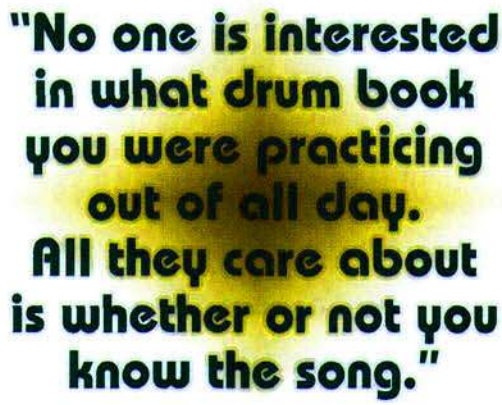
Maximizing Your Practice Time

by Zoro

As with most drummers I know, over the years I've wasted plenty of time in the practice room. However, after countless hours of practice, I believe I've devised a system that allows me to maximize my practice time for the greatest return. I'd like to share some of my ideas on the subject with you.

The Song Remains The Same

As time goes by, most of us eventually lose sight of what we need to practice the most. As far as I'm concerned, it's vitally important for a drummer to learn *songs*—and lots of them. What good is it if you have a super groove, incredible independence, and chops galore if you don't know very many songs? Almost every situation that you apply your drumming to will be within a predetermined framework. The only exception is go-off drum solo stuff that's really only appreciated by other drummers. I can't stress the importance of knowing songs enough.



The Subliminal Method

With songs as our focal point, let's approach learning them from a different direction. First, spend some serious time just *listening* to the song you wish to learn, before getting on the drums. Let the music soak deep into your soul. This is important! Most of us attempt to play the music before we really understand it. Don't be misled by what may sound very simple. Just because you understand what is being played doesn't mean you can play it. Internalize the music; learn it subconsciously first.

I have learned a gazillion songs using this method. I've made tapes of many of the standards in the jazz, funk, rock, and blues genres. Then I've played those tapes over and over in my car while driving or on a *Walkman* while doing some other activity. By doing this, I was programming my mind, storing up all those tunes to be retrieved upon demand. Later, when I'd be on a gig and someone called out one of those songs, I was able to play it fairly confidently even though I had never actually sat down to learn or transcribe it, because it was stored away in my subconscious memory.

Now, don't get me wrong: I'm not saying that I never actually sat down to practice songs. I've always done that. But in *conjunction* with that, I've learned many *more* songs by utilizing time that would otherwise be wasted.

A Balanced Approach

Something to keep in mind when actually practicing a song on the drums is this: Most standard pop or rock tunes have several verses, and generally they repeat the chorus one or more times. But they usually have a single "bridge" or C section—the passage that generally only happens once in the song. So if you practice such a song twenty times, you'll have played the bridge twenty times, while having played the chorus and verses at least two or three times as much. This arithmetic explains why quite often in bands the weakest section of the song is the bridge. At times in my career when I served as musical director, I always rehearsed the bridge section many times for that very reason. I suggest you do the same with the tunes you practice.

Developing A Repertoire Of Songs

Every style of music has a core of tunes associated with it that are most frequently requested by listeners and played on gigs. These are known as the "classics" or the "standards" for that idiom. It would be wise to investigate what those songs are for the style of music you're most interested in mastering. You can do this simply by asking other players and doing a little research. You're bound to end up playing them somewhere, and you'll be glad you did your homework when someone calls those songs. Other musicians are impressed by drummers who know how to play the right stuff over the music. Chops are pointless if you can't catch the accents with the band. No one is interested in what drum book you were practicing out of all day. All they care about is whether or not you know the song.

Breaking It Down

Have you ever been playing a song and come to a section that you couldn't execute comfortably? That's a red flag. You need to stop and break it down before going any further. It may be the

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coordination of the bass drum foot, a hi-hat lick, or the ghosting of a snare beat. It may be the rhythmic kicks or figures. Whatever it is, the song should dictate to you what you need to practice. Isolate the problem, identify what's giving you trouble, and concentrate on that.

There is a huge difference between really *transcribing* a song and jamming whatever you want over it. You have to really break it down and figure out what makes it work and why. I don't necessarily mean to literally transcribe it on paper—although that's fine if you know how. I'm talking about *mentally* transcribing it—memorizing it. I guarantee that all the great players have spent plenty of time mentally picking apart hundreds of songs. They learned songs beat by beat, fill by fill, and section by section. That's a lot of work, and it takes serious mental focus. But it's how you develop the all-important "ear." There are many great drummers who don't read a lick of music, but they have highly trained ears. If *you* can't read, you'd better have ears like Dumbo, because you are going to rely on them when it comes to picking up things quickly.

Practicing Time Feels

To the right is a list of various time feels you should have together in order to be a versatile drummer. (This is by no means a definitive list; it's only to give you some ideas.) Playing along to *songs* within a particular style and time feel is the only way to really get that feel together. Playing exercises can help to develop coordination, but not feel.

Time Feel Chart

Style: Rock. Funk. Blues, Country
quarter-note grooves
8th-note grooves
broken 8th- and 16th-note grooves (one- and two-hand)
16th-note slow grooves (one hand)
16th-note funk grooves (two-hand, RLRL)
12/8 grooves (one-hand lead; triplet feel)
12/8 grooves (two-hand, RLR LRL; triplet feel)
shuffles (all types)
two-beat feel (gospel, polka, country)
hip-hop, go-go, new jack swing
New Orleans grooves (second-line feel)

Style: Jazz
4/4 swing (slow, medium, fast)
3/4 swing
5/4 swing
brush applications (slow, medium, fast)

Style: Fusion
odd-meter grooves (5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, etc.)

Style: Latin/Ethnic
samba
bossa nova
songo
calypso
6/8 Afro-Cuban
bolero
salsa
reggae
baiao

Note: All time feels should be practiced at various tempos for greater flexibility and control. The majority of your practice should consist of mastering various time feels within the context of *songs*.

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Here's a method I came up with for directly targeting time feels in my practice schedule. Buy ten blank 90-minute cassette tapes, and label each tape with a different time feel: shuffle, 12/8, salsa, 5/4, 7/4, samba, etc. Record only songs that fall into the category of that particular time feel on each tape. Now you have ten different tapes of various grooves. This way you can practice the time feels as they actually apply to a variety of songs, complete with all the kicks, rhythms, and accents that go with each groove. You eliminate wasted practice time flipping records, rewinding tapes, or skipping back on CDs.

Let's take shuffles, for example. Record a tape of shuffles, starting off with the slowest ones you can find and adding faster ones progressively through the tape. By the end of the tape you should have recorded the fastest shuffle tempos you can find. This system allows you to practice for ninety minutes on shuffles at all tempos, starting off nice and slow, then warming up to the mid tempos. By the time you approach the fast tempos at the end, you're much more relaxed and less likely to develop tendonitis.

The Music Search

In order to create a tape library with which to make my practice schedule more productive, I began searching my own record, tape, and CD collection. I identified every tune of a given style or time feel. After exhausting my own resources, I turned to musician friends of mine. I used to sift through their music collections, searching especially for grooves I didn't have enough of in my own library.

Start listening to the CDs you already have. Analyze every song and identify what kind of groove it is. Give every tune a time-feel classification. Additionally, use a *Dr. Beat* or similar metronomic device to establish a tempo setting for each tune. Keep a sheet telling you the tempos, time feels, and approximate running time with each practice tape. This all takes some time to put together, but it's time well spent, because once you do the homework you'll waste much less time in the practice room. You'd be surprised at the results that even a short amount of *constructive* practice can achieve.

As a technical note, I recommend purchasing a CD player that has an A/B switch on it. (I have a Denon model *DCD-690.)* The A/B switch allows you to play the same section of music over and over, without having to start at the beginning of the track. This is absolutely *great*—especially for long songs. If you're having difficulty with a passage ten minutes into a song, you can concentrate solely on that section. This feature has saved me lots of time when learning new material, because I go straight to the difficult sections and get them out of the way first. I home in on all the kicks and accents in that section and really get them down.

The A/B switch can be invaluable when working with instructional books, too. There are many great books on the market with accompanying CDs—but they have a tendency to cram a million beat examples onto each track selection. This can be a pain in the neck if you want to focus on the thirteenth example of a given track. Again, the A/B switch lets you repeat that one example over and over.

Another great feature to have on a CD player (if you can still find it) is a pitch-control switch. (Denon used to make this as well.) This feature allows you to play the tune much slower than the original tempo, which is great for learning purposes and transcribing difficult licks. Once you're comfortable with playing the groove at a slow tempo, you can move it back to the original tempo. From that point you can turn the pitch control up and play it at a much faster tempo. Many live versions of songs are played at faster tempos than the recorded versions. This is one sure way of getting used to playing the tune under those conditions.

When I get bored with my tapes I make new ones of different songs, so my library just keeps growing. Over the years I have accumulated over 3,000 CDs. This has been a big investment, but it's not unlike a carpenter who must buy all the necessary tools to complete his job at the highest level. This technique of practicing has been great for my playing because it helped me to identify my weaknesses. When I was required to play a gig that stressed a certain time feel, this was a way to focus on that feel. Practicing with a library of tapes that emphasize various time feels is an excellent way of becoming a great drummer.

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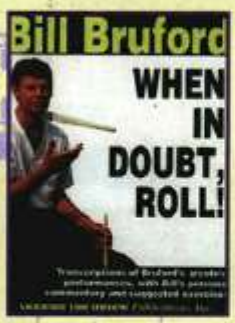

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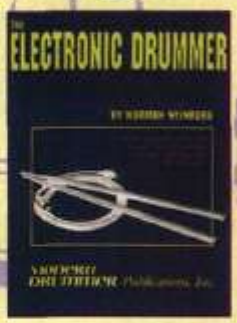

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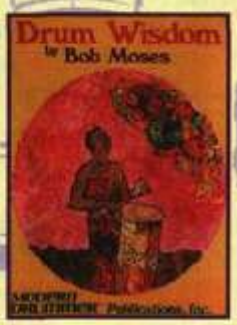

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MOD7

Joe Chambers

by Mark Griffith

Joe Chambers is not a household name, but he holds an important place in drumming history. He has played with many of jazz's greatest innovators, including Wayne Shorter, Chick Corea, Charles Mingus, Joe Zawinul, and Joe Henderson. Chambers is also a pianist, a vibraphonist, and a masterful composer.

Joe made his drumming and compositional debut in 1964, on Freddie Hubbard's *Breaking Point.* His drumming made this recording different from Hubbard's previous outings. While many drummers of the '60s were busy playing lots of notes and breaking up the time, Chambers played fewer notes and broke up the space that *contained* the time. On *Breaking Point,* the accent schemes contained within Joe's playing were not camouflaged by a barrage of surrounding notes. This, and his elasticized timekeeping, make Joe Chambers and *Breaking Point* the place to begin studying the complex and challenging jazz drumming of the mid-'60s.

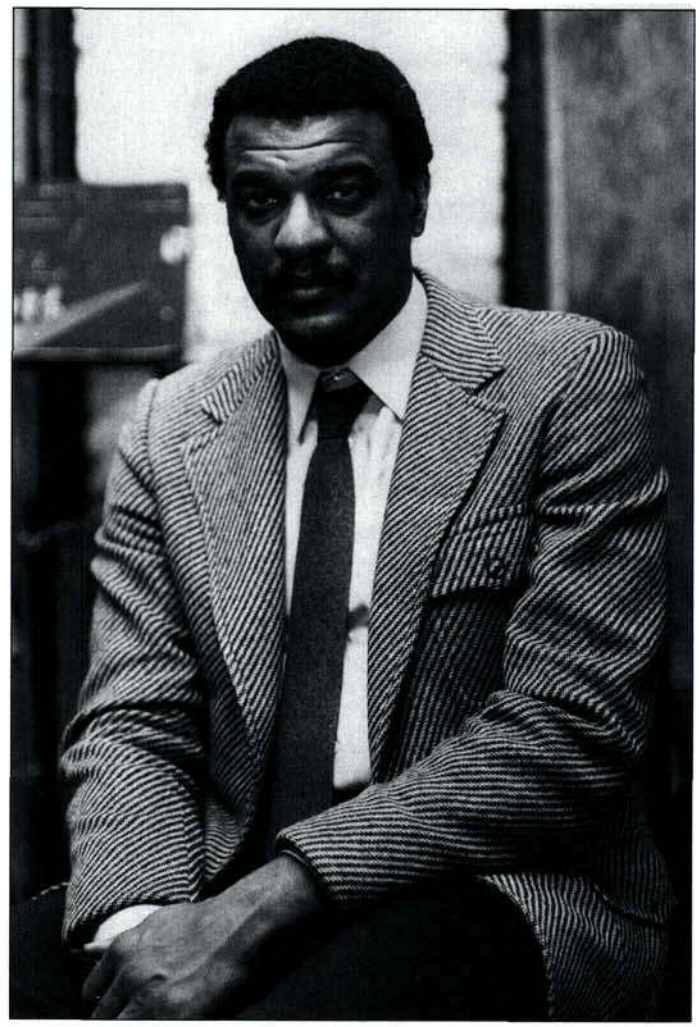
Wayne Shorter's recordings *Etcetera, The All Seeing Eye, Adam's Apple,* and *Schizophrenia* all feature Joe's fantastic drumming. On *Etcetera,* the quartet seems to float on Chambers' dancing and propulsive beat. Joe's brushwork on "Penelope" is strong but subtle. On "Toy Tune" Joe lets the other musicians provide the final accents to his drumming crescendos. Joe fills up the breaks in "Barracudas" in inventive ways, while his solo on the title track evolves from a spatial vamp into a powerful cadenza, then back to a virtual whisper. *Etcetera* is a very important jazz recording, and a powerful statement to the greatness of Joe Chambers.

On the classic Shorter quartet session *Adam's Apple,* Chambers gives a clinic in dynamics. When the music calls for very quiet and subtle support, Joe provides it. On tunes that call for more aggressive drumming, he builds so gradually that you can't even tell it's happening. Then, when the need for "bashing" subsides, he takes it right back down to where it was at the outset. Chambers' treatment of the original version of "Footprints" is very different from the later Miles Davis version with Tony Williams, providing two contrasting (yet brilliant) approaches to the same tune. On "Chief Crazy Horse" Joe lighthandedly bashes through a rhythmic vamp with taste and precision.

On *Schizophrenia* and *The All Seeing Eye* the groups are larger, and Chambers' support is more varied. *Schizophrenia* is a fairly traditional outing, but *The All Seeing Eye* features lengthy pieces with multiple sections. Chambers is a pillar of strength and control, guiding the group through Wayne's complex compositions with grace and fire.

One of Joe Chambers' unique characteristics is his inclination to fit his transparent drumming around what is happening, instead of force-feeding the music. A perfect example of this can be found on "Mephistopheles" from *The All Seeing Eye.* Throughout this performance Chambers weaves his drumming in and out, searching for the space where his drums will fit. This way of playing makes him a sort of "anti-drumming drummer"—but a very musical one.

On McCoy Tyner's outstanding large-group recording *Tender Moments,* and Joe Henderson's brilliant *Mode For Joe,* Chambers' drumming supports the many soloists by *following* them as opposed to *leading* them. On both recordings Joe's intuitive support of the various soloists proves him to be almost musically psychic—and very aware of the sonic spectrum. When a soloist played high, Chambers would often complement that with a low rumble. Conversely, when a soloist played in a lower range, Chambers would balance that with more crashing and the use of his cymbals. This musical syncronicity is what makes Joe



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Chambers so important (and so popular with many of jazz's greatest musicians).

Another important aspect of Chambers' drumming is what he *doesn't* play. This characteristic is amply demonstrated on three recordings Joe made with the great Andrew Hill. *Andrew!* is a hard-driving date. *One For One* is very similar to the outstanding *Point Of Departure,* which featured Tony Williams. *Compulsion* is a unique recording that featured two African drummers in the rhythm section along with Chambers. Joe proved to be the perfect drummer in this context, since his style is focused on leaving space, not filling it up. These three recordings are all available in the outstanding box set *The Complete Blue Note Andrew Hill Sessions (1963-66).*

Perhaps part of the reason that Chambers doesn't sound like any other drummer is because he plays the drums like a vibraphonist. When you consider some of the special aspects of playing the vibes (such as dampening and muting), you gain important insight into his drumming.

Chambers had a strong relationship with vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson, and is on six of Bobby's early recordings: *Components, Dialogue, Happenings, Oblique, Patterns,* and *Total Eclipse.* (These recordings also include twelve of Joe's compositions.) All of these works employed a pianist along with the vibes. With this instrumentation it's often difficult for the drummer to find "his space." Again, this is one of Chambers' specialties, and it comes to the forefront on *Happenings* and *Oblique.* On *Happenings,* listen to how Joe's ride cymbal is quiet yet precise. At the end of Joe's drum solo on "Aquarian Moon" he fades out and concludes with complete silence. "The Omen" features Bobby and Joe switching instruments and playing freely with pianist Herbie Hancock. *Components* and *Dialogue* are each sextet affairs, requiring Joe to listen even harder to find "his space." On *Patterns* and *Total Eclipse,* Hutcherson's quartet is augmented by a single saxophonist, and features Joe at his best.

Total Eclipse featured pianist Chick Corea. Joe had played on Chick's 1966 recording *Inner Space.* The liner notes on that record state that Chambers was "occupying that magic netherworld between swing and space." In Corea's own words, Joe was playing "sounds and textures." This is an integral recording of mid-'60s modern jazz. *Patterns* included pianist Stanley Cowell. Cowell later called Joe for the adventurous *Brilliant Circles,* and recently for *Back To The Beautiful.*

Before Weather Report was formed, Joe Zawinul made a record titled simply *Zawinul.* It featured Wayne Shorter on sax, Miroslav Vitous on bass (both original members of Weather Report), and Chambers, playing music that Zawinul had written for Miles Davis. Based on the musicians involved, *Zawinul* could be considered the "first meeting" of Weather Report, and Joe Chambers is an integral part of it. You can hear the influence Zawinul and Chambers had on Miles' recording *In A Silent Way.* Around this same time both Zawinul and Chambers participated in an unreleased Miles Davis session that will be issued for the first time as part of an upcoming Davis box set. Miroslav Vitous's monumental *Mountain In The Clouds* recording was also done around this same

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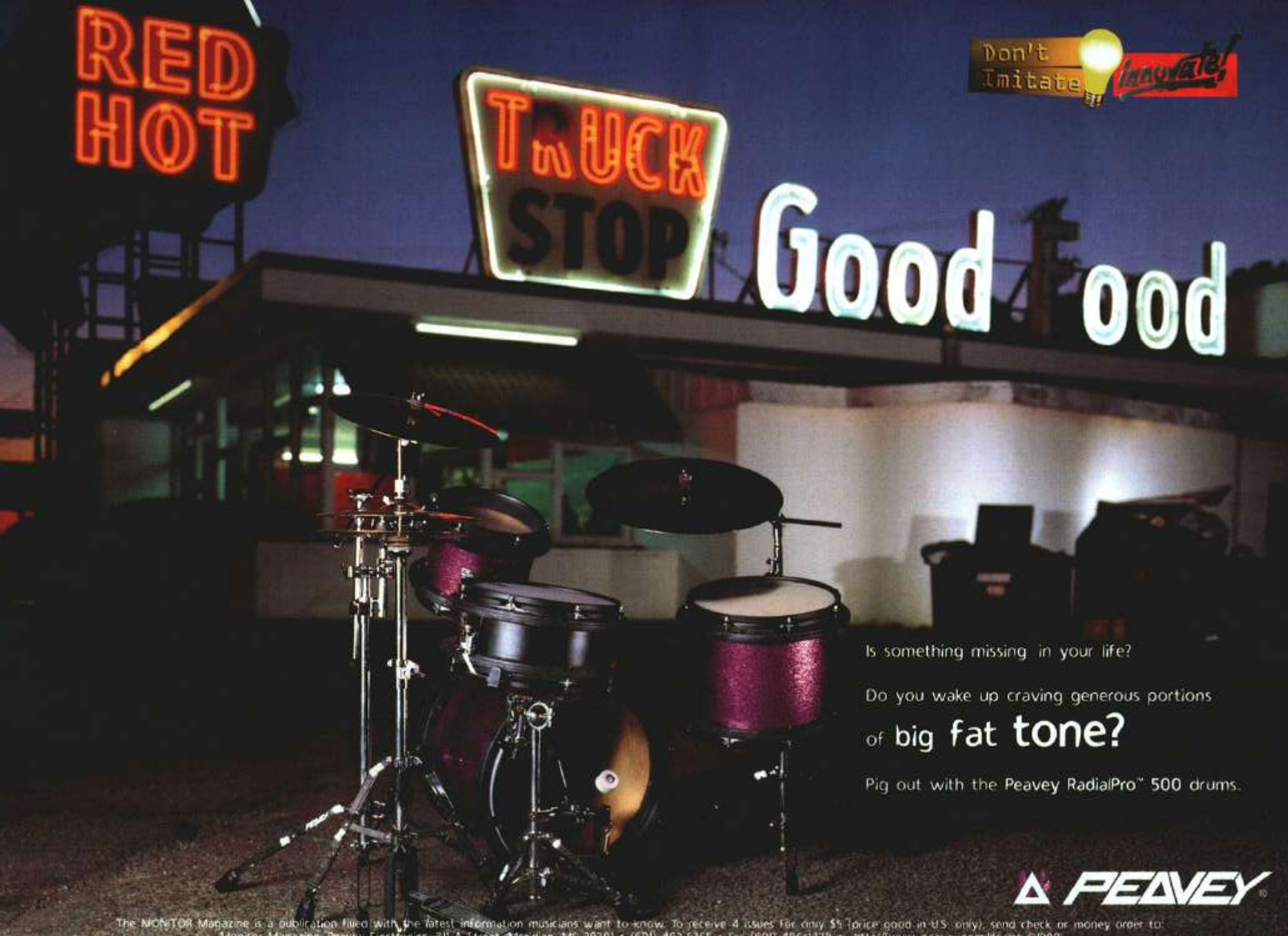
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time. Chambers plays drums on two songs; Jack DeJohnette is on the rest. It is simply outstanding.

In 1978 Charles Mingus wrote a thirty-minute suite called "Three Worlds Of Drums" for Dannie Richmond, Joe Chambers, and Steve Gadd, released on Mingus's *Me, MyselfAn Eye.* It is a fascinating concept and composition, and the three drummers are stunning. Chambers and Richmond play together on the rest of the recording. Also check out *Charles Mingus And Friends In Concert,* recorded in 1972.

In the early '70s, Chambers assembled a group for three unique recording sessions, all of which are contained on the recording *The Almoravid.* Two of the sessions were done with the instrumentation of drums, two mallet players, congas, percussion, and bass. One of these sessions also added piano. The third session featured a standard sextet. Each group played two tunes on the record. While *The Almoravid* is based on drums and percussion, there are no drum solos. Still, it's one of the greatest drummer-led recordings ever.

Chambers' next solo recording, *Double Exposure,* was also unique. It was made by the duet of Chambers and organist Larry Young, and Joe plays drums exclusively on just two cuts. The other four cuts are devoted to Chambers and Young playing piano and organ duets, with Chambers also adding percussion. Joe plays the piano beautifully. This is an outstanding recording by two very talented musicians.

Unfortunately both *The Almoravid* and *Double Exposure* are out of print—but they're worth searching for. One of the cuts from *The Almoravid,* "Medina," is on Woody Shaw's reissue *Last Of The Line.* That same reissue also contains Shaw's own recording *Cassandranite,* which includes Chambers' brilliant drumming.

Max Roach's percussion group M'Boom benefited from Chambers' percussive concept and skillful playing. For an example of this, listen to *M'Boom, Collage,* and *Live At S. O.B.'s.*

Joe recently made an outstanding live quartet recording called *Phantom Of The City,* featuring saxophonist Bob Berg. He also arranged, produced, and led a unique date (featuring twelve different saxophonists ranging from Steve Coleman and John Zorn to Phil Woods and Lee Konitz) called *The Colossal Saxophone Sessions.* On this double CD, Chambers groups many different saxophonists together. Because of their varied backgrounds, this concept could have been a disaster. Instead, Chambers' strong drumming provides the firm foundation necessary for an ultimately outstanding recording. In the '90s the Candid Jazz Masters (co-led by Chambers) recorded a tribute to Miles Davis simply titled *For Miles.* Also give a listen to '60s throwback Kevin Hays' inspired *Sweet Ear.*

Joe Chambers plays more than notes: He plays *music.* He is a creative musician and a musical drummer who refuses to repeat himself or stand still.

Tracking Them Down

Here's a list of the albums mentioned in this month's column, including label and catalog information. Below the list are several sources you might want to check for hard-to-find releases.

Freddie Hubbard
Breaking Point, Blue Note CDP 7 84172 2
Wayne Shorter
Etcetera, Blue Note CDP 7243 8 33581 2 0
Adam's Apple, Blue Note CDP 7 46403 2
The All Seeing Eye, Blue Note CDP 7243 8 291002 2
Schizophrenia, Blue Note CDP 7243 8 32096 2 0
Joe Henderson
Mode For Joe, Blue Note CDP 7 84227 2
McCoy Tyner
Tender Moments, Blue Note CDP 7 84275 2
Bobby Hutcherson
Oblique, Blue Note CDP 7 84444 2
Happenings, Blue Note CDP 746530 2
Components, Blue Note CDP 7243 8 29027 2 0
Dialogue, Blue Note CDP 7 46537 2
Patterns, Blue Note CDP 7243 8 33583 2 8
Total Eclipse, Blue Note CDP 7 84291 2
Chick Corea
Inner Space, Atlantic 305-2
Stanley Cowell
Brilliant Circles, Black Lion BLCD 760204
Back To The Beautiful, Concord Jazz CCD-4398
Andrew Hill
The Complete Blue Note Sessions (1963-66), Mosaic MD7-161
Andrew!, Blue Note BST-84203
One For One, Blue Note BNLA 459-2
Compulsion, Blue Note BST 84217
Joe Zawinul
Zawinul, Atlantic 1579-2
Miroslav Vitous
Mountain In The Clouds, Atlantic SD1622
Charles Mingus
And Friends In Concert, Columbia/Legacy C2K 64975
Me, Myself An Eye, Atlantic SD 8803
Joe Chambers
The Almoravid, Muse MR5035
Double Exposure, Muse MR5165
Phantom Of The City, Candid CCD 79517
Colossal Saxophone Sessions, Evidence ECD 22130-2
Candid Jazz Masters
ForMiles, Candid CCD 79710
Woody Shaw
Last Of The Line, 32 Jazz 32024
M'Boom
Live At S. O.B.'s, Bluemoon R2-79182
M'Boom, Columbia/Legacy CK57886
Collage, Soul Note 121059
Kevin Hays
Sweet Ear, Steeplechase SSCD 31282

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Third St. Jazz And Rock, (800) 486-8745
Rick Ballard Imports, PO Box 5063, Dept. DB, Berkeley, CA 94705
Double Time Jazz, PO Box 1244, New Albany, IN 47151
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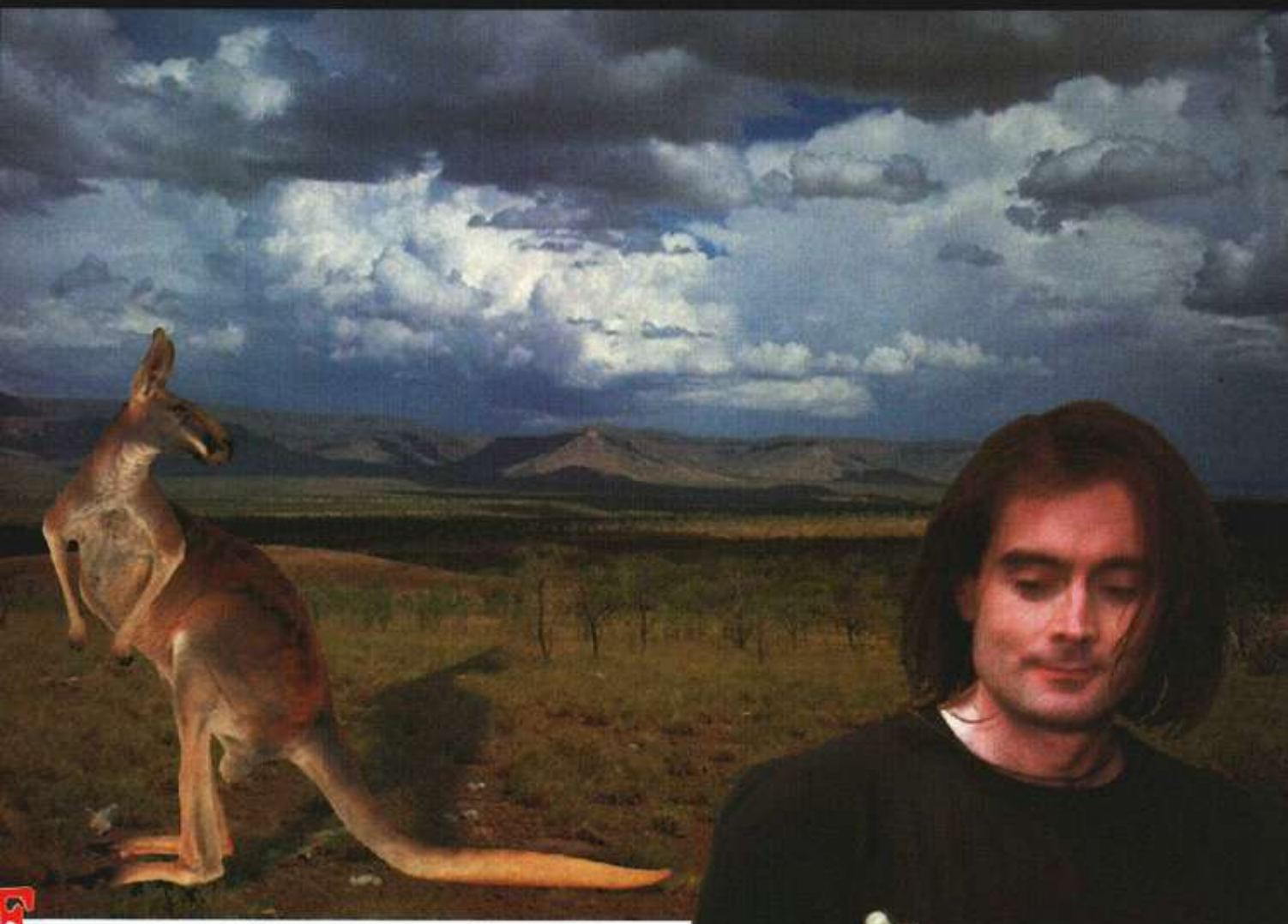

Every once in a while someone comes along that is so naturally talented and unbelievably proficient that they seem to defy the laws of physics. That someone is Virgil Donati. Comments from even the most famous and experienced players on the scene range from "I'm burning my drum set" to "I can't wait to get home and practice that 'cool foot thing'." Virgil's sticks of choice are two new models from Vater: the Powerhouse and the Shedder. In Virgil's own words, "They're straight, balanced, reliable; and they speak — LOUD"! That's high praise from the man who could use anything he wanted (including his bare hands) to pull extraordinary music out of his drum kit. Watch Virgil rock the house as soon as you can, but before you do, check out the sticks that help him do it — Vater.

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Getting The Best Sound From "Less Than The Best" Drums

by Larry T. Kennedy

For many of *us,* investing $2,500 or more to buy a top-of-the-line drumset is not an option at this point in our drumming careers. My band plays in small clubs every other weekend, and it would take every dollar that I make playing for *an entire year* to purchase the least-expensive, name-brand, top-of-the-line kit.

Of course, there are valid reasons that the pros play kits with shells of all maple or all birch. Top-of-the-line drums will sound good almost despite anything that you do to them. For those of us who own a less expensive drumkit, it is a bit more of a challenge to get a good sound—but it *can* be done. I've been playing an "entry level" Pearl *Export* kit for more than three years. While these drums sound pretty good (since I replaced the original batter heads), I'm still learning ways to make them sound better. Hopefully I can help you make the drums *you* now own sound better, too!

Let's start our quest for the best sound from our drums by acknowledging a few drum "truisms":

Drum Truism #1—You will never be able to make your drums sound exactly like the drums you hear on CDs. When you listen to a drummer on a CD, the drum sound often has as much to do with recording technology as it does with drum technology. Recording engineers can use equalizers, compressors, and other gear to alter the actual sound of drums and cymbals. Plus, CDs are recorded in a controlled environment, designed to yield optimum sound. The garages, bars, and clubs the majority of us play in are *far* from being "controlled" environments.

Drum Truism #2—How your drums sound to you is not the most important concern. One of the most recent lessons I've learned is that my drums and cymbals sound radically different to the audience from the way they do to me as I sit behind them. Ask yourself these important questions:

1) How do my drums sound to the audience?

2) How do my drums sound to the other members of the band?

and, only then:

3) How do my drums sound to me from behind the kit?

Drum Truism #3—Your drums and cymbals will sound different in every different place you play. If you depend primarily or totally on the acoustic sound of your drums and cymbals, you'll likely have to adjust your sound from one place to the next. The size of the room, the height of the ceiling, covered or bare walls, bare or carpeted stages—all these factors will affect your sound.

Drum Truism #4—Your drums can always sound better! Never before have we had so many ways to change the sound of our drums. More types of heads from more manufacturers, more muffling products, more electronics choices—there's *always* something else to try in your quest for the best possible drum sound!

So, once we understand these "truisms," where do we start?

Analyzing Your Drum Sound

First, you need to determine how your drums actually sound to the people you play for. There are a couple of ways to do this:

1) Tape your band from the back of the room, with a good tape deck and decent mic', placed where the audience will be hearing you.

2) Have a drummer friend play your kit, with your band, while you listen from the back of the room.

Of these alternatives, I much prefer the first. This is the only way to tell how your drums sound to the audience when *you* play them. Be sure to always record yourself playing with your band, as your drums will sound different when played alone. What you want to know is how your drums sound in their normal musical context. You don't have to make a studio-quality tape. Make the best tape you can with the equipment you have.

When I listened to the tape I had made of my band, I found that the distance between my drums and the audience makes my toms sound muddy and lower-pitched "out there" than they do to me. They also all sounded like the same drum. My snare sounded "brittle," and my bass drum was often not being heard at all.

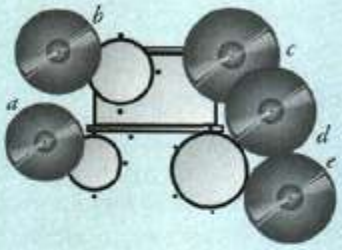
Making Your Drums Sound Better

Once you've heard your tape and know how your drums actually sound, decide what sound you *want.* Then, don't quit experimenting until you get that sound!

I recently invested $7.50 in the excellent book *Drum Tuning* by Larry Nolly, and have spent quite a few hours in my den experimenting with tuning and head selection, using this book as a guide. After working with *Drum Tuning,* my philosophy is to get the best sound out of each individual drum, and then make *slight* adjustments to make the drums sound good together. (I'll probably also buy Bob Gatzen's *Drum Tuning: Sound And Design* video to learn even more about how to get better sound from my drums.)

Based on what I learned from *Drum Tuning,* I began tuning my toms a bit higher than sounded "right" to me from behind the kit, and took off almost all of the muffling. After much effort, I

RAMONE
marky



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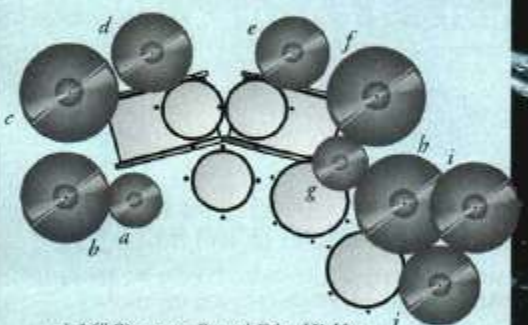

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learned that there was nothing that I could do to make my 12" and 13" mounted toms sound distinct one from another *and* get a good sound from each drum; I had to tune the 12" too high and the 13" too low—and this *still* wasn't effective. This discovery led me to order 10" and 14" *Export* tom add-ons, and to drop the 13" tom from my setup. This greatly eased my tuning efforts to make my toms sound different from one another, and it was much cheaper than buying a whole new kit.

Another, less expensive approach I took prior to buying these add-on toms was to set up a four-piece, with either the 12" or 13" tom and the 16" floor tom. Since the audience wasn't hearing three distinct tom sounds with the 12/13/16 lineup, I could "lose" one of the mounted toms and still get the same effect.

As for the problem with my snare drum, I experimented with different tunings, and finally found a good sound by adjusting the tunings of both the batter (top) and resonant (bottom) heads. I had to mike my bass drum for it to be heard. (More on this later.)

Generally, thicker or two-ply heads are going to be a good choice for less-expensive drums. Most often, it's difficult to get full, low tones from inexpensive drums; thicker heads will add depth. Try new heads and new head combinations. Replace your bottom heads with thicker, thinner, or just better-quality heads. Try a thicker batter head on your floor tom than on the other toms (my favorite trick).

Ask for advice from local drummers who have a good drum sound. Also consult the clerk at your local music store. Call a drumhead manufacturer for advice; these guys can be a lot of help when "chasing" a better sound. Don't try to reinvent the wheel, but use any and every resource to get advice on head selection, tuning, muffling, etc.

Playing Different Places

I always tune up my drums at home, in a quieter place than I'll be able to find when I set up in a bar or club. However, I know that I'll have to adjust my tuning for the room as I set up, and then again based on how the drums sound in that room while the band is playing.

I also sometimes change heads, based on the size of the room and how hard or soft I'll likely be playing there. If I'll be playing fairly hard, I use twin-ply heads; for playing softly, I use single-ply heads, tuned a bit higher. (I use a second cymbal bag to carry spare heads with me when I play out, and have either the one- or two-ply heads ready to swap over, should the ones already mounted prove to not be the right choice for that room.)

Try to make a tape each time you play a new place (during sound check, if possible, so that you can play the tape back before you "play for pay"), and make adjustments based upon what you hear.

I'll save you some of the aggravation that I have gone through by suggesting that you start with your *bottom* or resonant heads in adjusting your drums for different rooms. Tuning these heads a bit higher or lower in various rooms can particularly help your toms!

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Bass	16x22	10
F. Tom	10x12	6
T. Tom	11x13	6
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T. Tom	11x13	12
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Mic's And Electronics

Once you've exhausted the acoustic alternatives, explore the electronic ones. The pros "close-mike" each drum and run these through a mixer. Costing at least $1,000, this proposition is neither cost-effective nor necessary for the relatively small rooms where my band plays. Instead, I mike my bass drum—nothing fancy, just an Audio Technica *Pro 25* bracketed onto my bass drum hoop and pointed through the vent hole in the front head. The low tone of an unmiked bass drum just won't cut through much amplification. In a big room, I also hang a mic' overhead to add just a bit of drum and cymbal sound to the PA mix.

Another approach that I will soon explore is triggering drums and running a drum module signal into our PA. Not only will this approach cost about half of what close-miking would, but it also seems to be a better way to get the sound I want from my drums. Triggering prevents feedback and other problems that miking each drum can cause in a small club, and it dosen't pick up my cymbals (which are already being heard just fine), as mic's would do. Triggering should allow me to put some of the bottom back in my toms (which, as mentioned above, I now tune a bit higher than I prefer for them to cut through), or even "dial in" distinct tones in the sound module for my 12" and 13" toms.

Summation

Too often, we're convinced by advertising to believe that the only way we can get a good drum sound is to buy a new, better, and more expensive set of drums. However, applying the tips I've recommended here should help you get a better sound from the drums you already own. And, when you and I *can* justify investing in a better set of drums, we'll be better prepared to make *that* set sound as good as possible, too.

Resources

For info on tuning drums: *Modern Drummer,* Mar. '94

For info on miking drums: *Modern Drummer,* Oct. '94

For info on triggering: *Modern Drummer,* Sept-Dec. '96

For info on drumheads contact:
Aquarian, (714) 632-0230
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Evans, (516) 439-3300 or www.daddario.com
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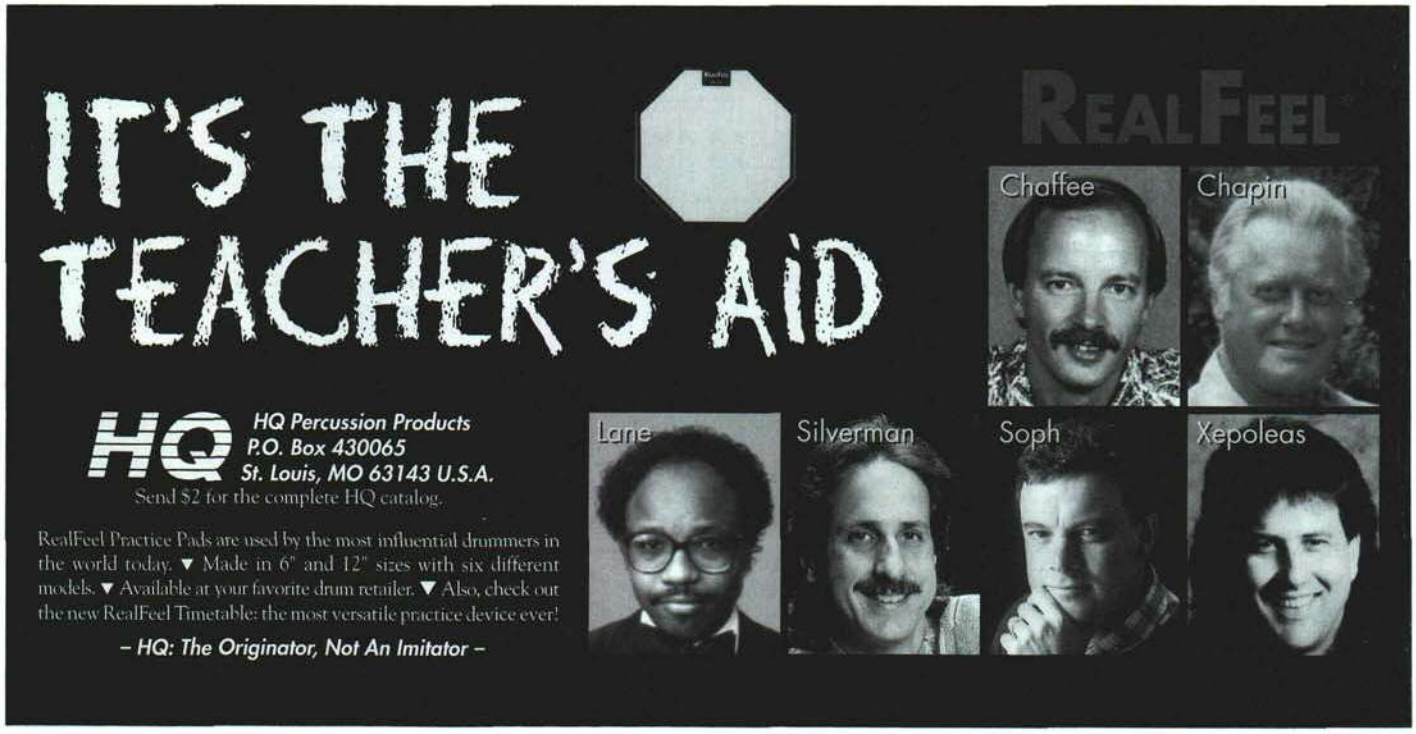
Should you have specific questions or comments, please feel free to e-mail me at larrytkennedy@mailexcite.com. If you don't have access to e-mail, voice-mail me at (912) 895-6059.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Study In Rhythms, Part 2

by Joe Morello
Transcribed by Jim Jacobus

MUSIC KEY

Last month, in "Study In Rhythms, Part 1," I presented a number of exercises using triplets and 8th notes designed to develop the ability to play single- or double-bass drum patterns while playing various rhythms with the hands. This month we'll expand that concept with the addition of 16th notes. As I mentioned in Part 1, this may look simple at first, but it will take practice to play accurately.

There are several ways to approach these exercises. For example, try playing the hand parts using alternate sticking. Then play them as all left- or right-hand strokes. Likewise, try playing the bass drum as singles, and then using double bass. For further development, play a jazz ride rhythm on top with your right hand playing the written parts underneath.

Practice at a comfortable tempo. Concentrate on accuracy rather than speed, which will follow naturally once you achieve accuracy. Diligent practice will get results!

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Setup 9:30pm
Teardown 2:00am
Thursday 1/22
Setup 9:30pm
Teardown 1:00am
Friday 1/23
Setup 9:30pm
Teardown 2:00am
Saturday 1/24
Setup 9:30pm
Teardown 2:00am
Tuesday 1/26
Setup 8:30pm
Teardown 12:00a
Thursday 1/28
Setup 9:30pm
Teardown 1:00am
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Saturday 1/30
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Teardown 2:00am
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Saturday 2/7
Setup 9:30pm

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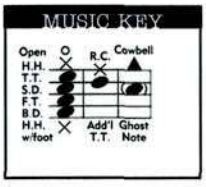
Good Things Come In 3s

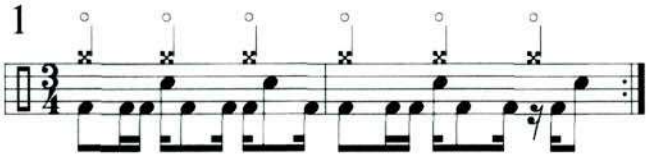
by Rod Morgenstein



There's an incredible amount of drum material currently available in 4/4 time, so this month I'd like to offer the following patterns in the less popular, yet equally wonderful time signature of 3/4. Several different drumming styles are represented, utilizing both triplet and 16th-note feels. The songo bass drum pattern in example 3 works well in 3/4, as does the baiao bass drum rhythm in example 4. Example 5 has an Afro-Cuban flavor to it with a bit of bembo in there (as does example 9), and examples 1, 6, 7, and 10 are more funk- and rock-based.

The time signature of 3/4 lends itself to an interesting array of feels and emotions, and most any beats in 4/4 can be readjusted to fit its three-note pulse. Be sure to add it to your repertoire.

1



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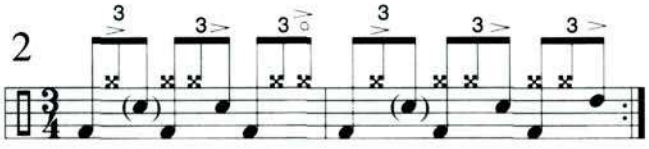

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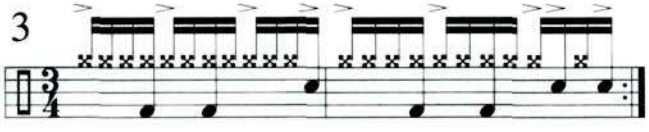

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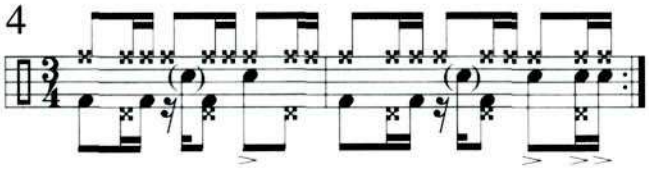

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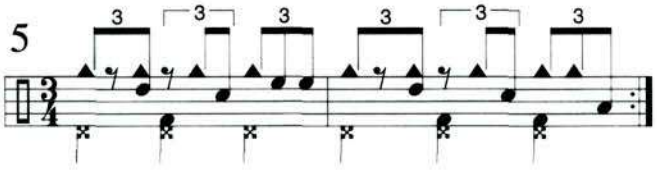

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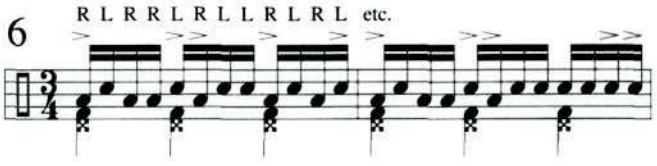

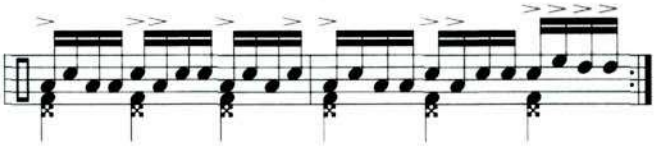

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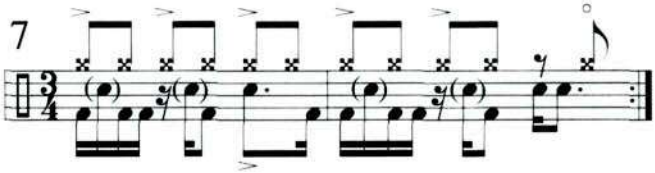

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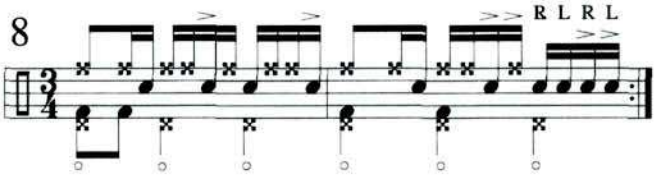

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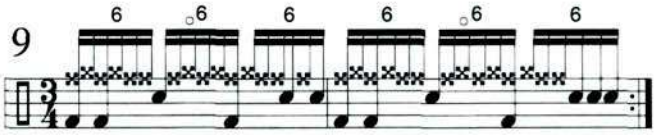

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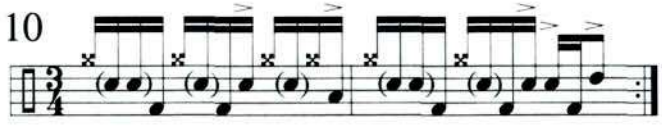

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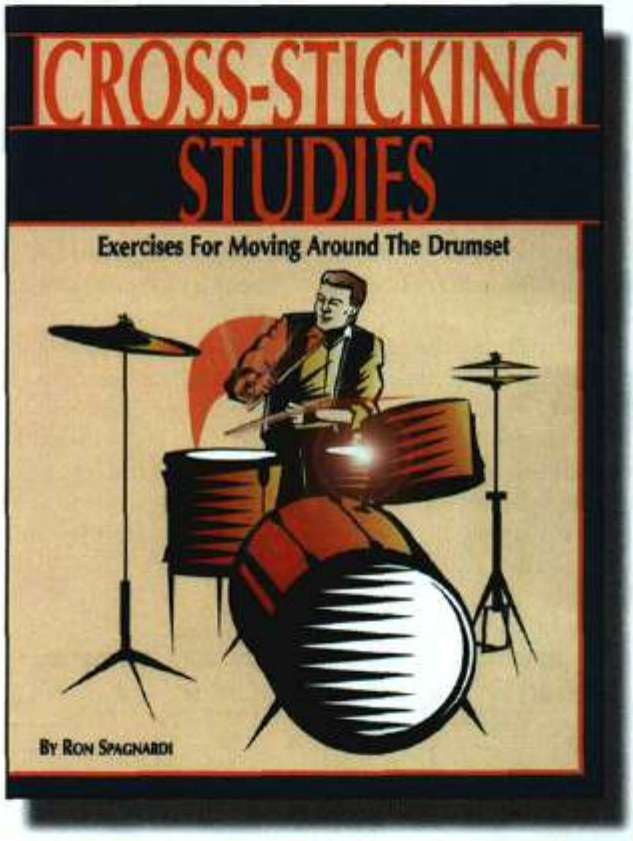

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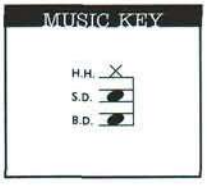
Rolling Funk

by Rusty Parker

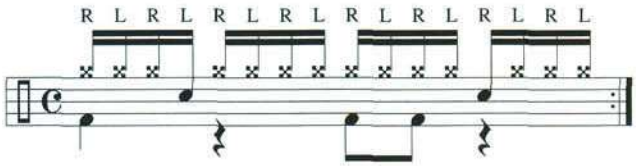


The following patterns came about as a result of the music I heard in the early '80s, when drummers like Steve Gadd, David Garibaldi, Graham Lear, and Harvey Mason were using short, rudimental-type rolls to embellish funk-style grooves.

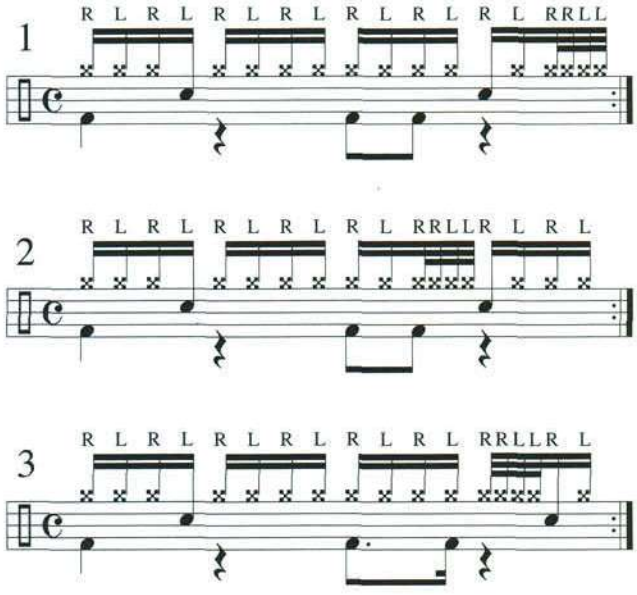
After analyzing their playing, I heard short rolls in grooves that were usually made up of 16th-note hi-hat patterns with alternate hand sticking. After experimenting with different combinations, I found they flow very well in the funk medium and work best as embellishments in a groove or to fill holes. Listen to the drummers mentioned above, or to players like Dennis Chambers, Chuck Morris, and Dave Weckl, and you'll hear expert applications of these ideas.

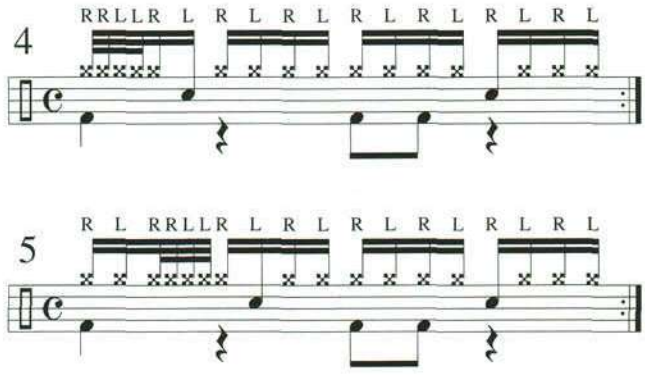
The first pattern written below is the basic beat to which the doubles are applied. Exercises 1-9 incorporate the rolls. Play these slowly at first, making sure the rolls are clean and even. Also, the notated bass drum patterns are basic suggestions. Once your hands are under control with the rolling concept, you can then make the bass drum patterns more complex. Finally, when using these concepts in a musical situation, be sure they are just that—musical!

Basic Beat

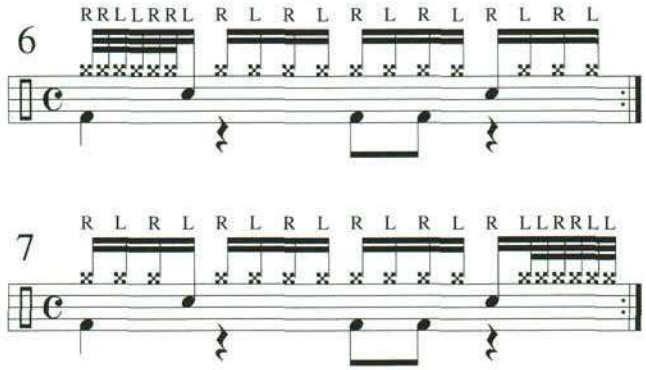


Incorporating The Five-Stroke Roll

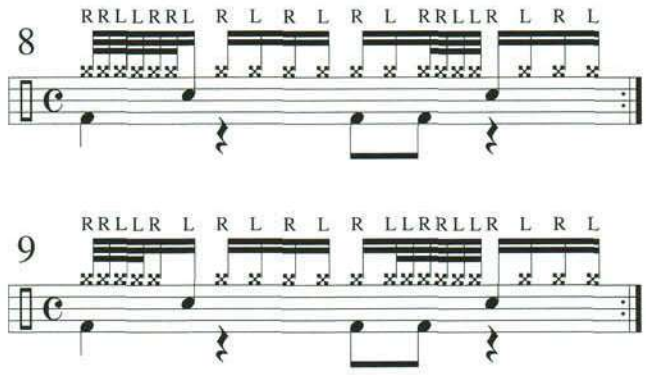




Incorporating The Seven-Stroke Roll



Roll Combinations



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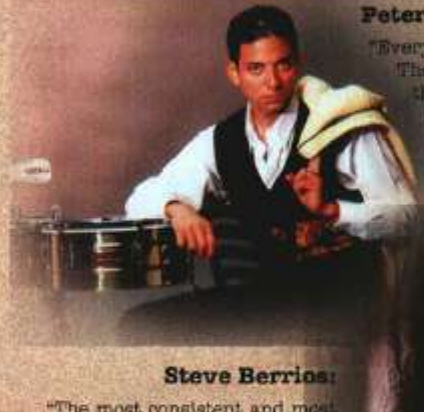

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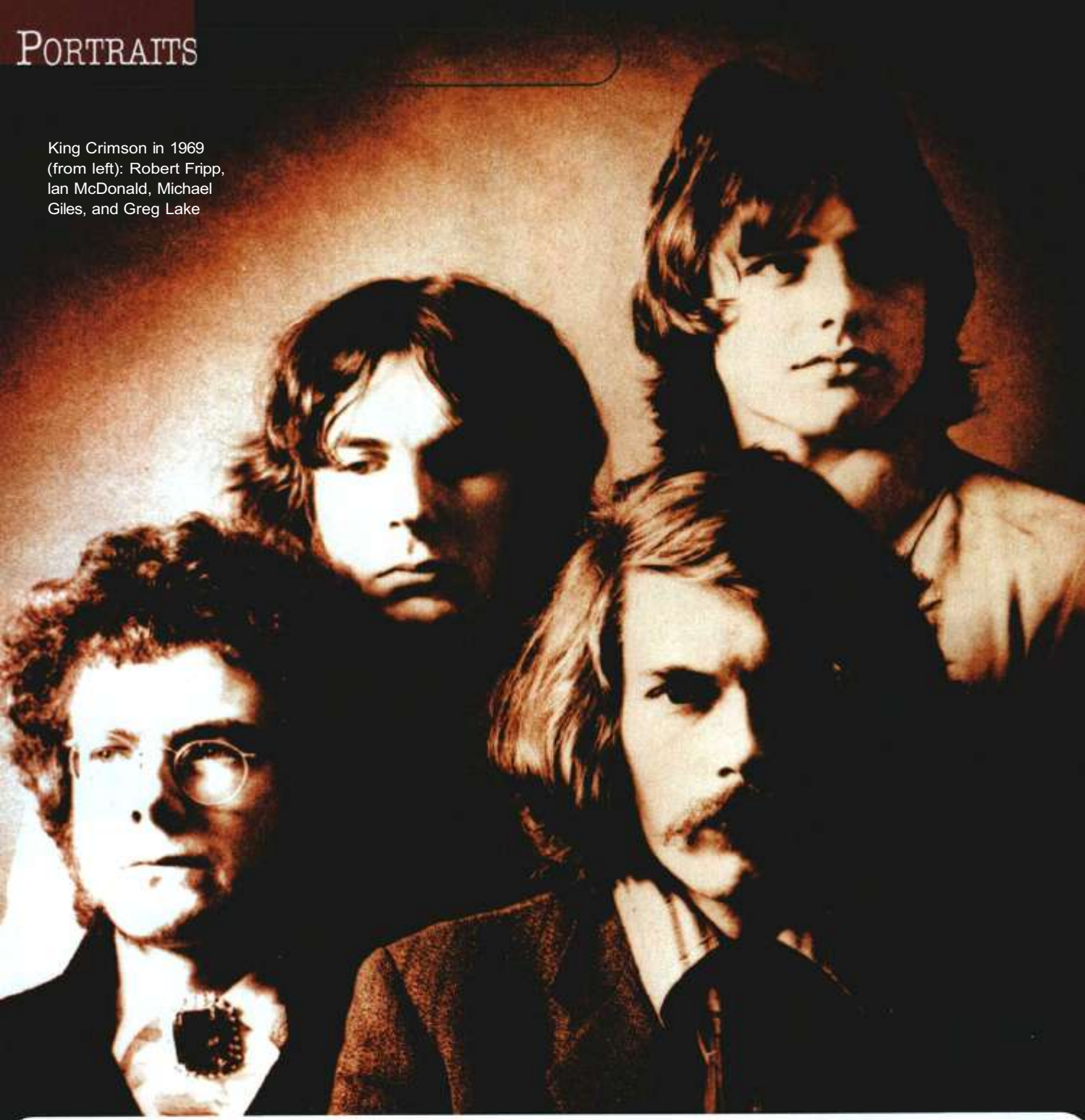

King Crimson in 1969 (from left): Robert Fripp, Ian McDonald, Michael Giles, and Greg Lake

MICHAEL GILES

Crimson Original

by Ken Micallef

Before Bill Bruford steered King Crimson into polyrhythmic delirium, a funky drummer from Bournemouth, England named Michael Giles brought a highly developed and individual style to bear on that band's groundbreaking blend of art rock theory and instrumental sophistication. Giles' flashy, rudimental sticking and abstract ideas erupted full-blown on King Crimson's first US hit. *In The Court Of The Crimson King.* Today Giles' chunky double bass drum fills, bar-stretching snare drum rolls, exotic cymbal-bell flourishes, and edgy, big band-style fills sound as astounding as they did in 1969.

The unlikely success of *In The Court Of The Crimson King* and *In The Wake Of Poseidon* (released in 1969 and 1970, respectively) propelled the band onto a headlining US tour. Unprepared for the acclaim that followed, the original lineup soon crumbled under the weight of cramped buses and clashing egos. But the music remains.

Culled from live BBC sessions and concerts given at the Fillmore West and East, a two-CD set titled *Epitaph* (Discipline Global Music) documents that first US tour—and the band's amazing onstage chemistry. Often jamming into near free-form, avant-garde territory, guitarist Robert Fripp. bassist/vocalist Greg Lake, saxophonist Ian McDonald, and drummer Giles blew through the now-famous tracks "21st Century Schizoid Man," "Epitaph," and "In The Court..." like four magicians concocting their own solar explosion.

Now living in Bath, Michael Giles sheds light on those halcyon days when the 21st century seemed a distant dream, and King Crimson a revolutionary proposition. The interview took place at a recent press gathering of the original members to help launch the new CD.

"WE NEVER DISCUSSED BEING RADICAL OR DANGEROUS OR ADVENTUROUS...WE JUST DID IT."

KM: Why did the band come together for this re-release event?

MG: Because it's all the live work that we did in 1969. Nothing like this has happened since, particularly all the live performances recorded in clubs and at festivals. We never heard them at the time; the cassettes were taken from recording consoles and then lost in boxes or taken by roadies over the years. That has brought us back together, even though not as a playing band.

KM: Fripp is very good at keeping the different versions of King Crimson intact.

MG: I am amazed at his documentation. He's a librarian, a journal writer. I'm glad he's done it, because the rest of us haven't had that dedication to documentation.

KM: What was it like to hear the tapes after all these years?

MG: I was astonished at how dangerous and adventurous we were. It's funny, because when you are in the middle of it, it all seems very normal. I haven't heard that music for twenty-five years, and some of it I'd *never* heard. The drum solo on the Plumpton gig was really good.

KM: On "Groon," the drumming is very exciting, with triplet phrasing between the bass drum and toms. "In The Court Of The Crimson King" has straight-ahead jazz sections with free playing as well. The band was on the edge even then.

MG: Hearing it now, it *still* sounds on the edge. If I was to go to a concert and hear a band doing that today, I'd be really excited.

KM: For people who can't imagine what London was like in the '60s, can you describe the creativity of that era?

MG: As musicians we were very serious; we weren't on the "hippy, flower power" trail. We were just intent on expressing ourselves through music. We weren't part of the swinging London scene, although we were regarded as an underground cult band at the time. And we played all the hip venues as well. Jimi Hendrix used to come see us. But we were so involved with the music that we hardly noticed the fashions and all the goings-on. We weren't into drugs or that scene.

What I do remember was the amount of independent—or what we call "pirate"—radio. There was music of all different kinds

being played, which had never happened before. The pirate radio really opened it up in the UK.

KM: Was there any consideration for pop music in Crimson, or were you totally about being creative?

MG: It was a strange situation, because when we got into rehearsal we experienced so much energy from each other, there wasn't time to consider doing something commercial. There was so much else happening, ideas flying all over the place. We never discussed being radical or dangerous or adventurous...we just did it. But we took enormous risks. For instance, we'd borrowed money to buy equipment. If people didn't like the music, we would have been failures and deep in debt. The business setup of Kind Crimson was just as risky as the music. We were going into uncharted waters.

KM: What was your training and experience before King Crimson began?

MG: I started playing when I was fourteen, and I had lessons for about a year. My dad was musical; he played violin. There was always lots of classical music in the house. I was into Buddy Holly, Chuck Berry, Mugsy Spanier, Bob Dylan, the Beatles, and both trad jazz and modern jazz. I don't think any particular drummer had a major influence on me, although I thought Elvin Jones and Tony Oxley were pushing the boat out a bit further.

KM: Are you a matched-grip or traditional-grip player?

MG: I started with traditional grip, then went over to matched. It gave me more power in the left hand. In my studies, I was working on time signatures and general rudiments. But my focus has never been that technical: I regard myself more as an expressionist with just enough ability. It's funny what you can do when you get fired up.

KM: You have such a unique style and powerful chops. Did you spend hours in the practice room?

MG: No. Maybe it does *sound* like great chops, but I never thought so. A lot of it has to do with emotional energy and completely letting go and responding to what is happening around you. On "Groon," Robert came up with an idea that was

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almost a throwaway in the studio—and I just responded to it. Many drummers have more technique than I have. It's more of an attitude, really. It's what I call "distressing" things, or doing things in an alternative fashion.

I do get frustrated musically. I don't listen to "normal" music; it doesn't excite me. I like anything that is close to the edge. The last few years I've been listening to [20th-century composer/instrument inventor] Harry Parted.

KM: What led to King Crimson?

MG: My brother Peter and I were playing in various bands around the country from our home base in Bournemouth, on the south coast of England. When we heard Bob Dylan, we thought we could do anything. We advertised for a keyboard player who sang—and who should turn up but Robert Fripp, a guitarist who doesn't sing, [laughs] We were so impressed that we *had* to play together.

In London we became known as Giles, Giles & Fripp [recording *The Cheerful Insanity Of Giles, Giles & Fripp* for Deram Records]. That was the forerunner to King Crimson, though the musical differences are like chalk and cheese. I did a little singing along with my brother, and the three of us wrote the music. It was the beginning of the free experimental playing, but only a bit. That album has some really stupid traditional music, as well as some monologues—verbals between each track, which still make me laugh. Robert's monologue was "The Saga Of Rodney Toadie." My bit was a variation on one line, "I know a man whose name is George." Back then, it was between the Bonzo Dog Doodah Band and Peter Cook & Dudley Moore, then Monty Python came out in 1970. It was all about British humor.

KM: Did Giles, Giles & Fripp get much work?

MG: No. [laughs] We did two or three television appearances, but no live gigs. That was in London in 1968, when we met Ian McDonald from Fairport Convention [and later with Foreigner]. Peter also had a co-writing friend named Peter Sinfield. Robert and I discussed having a serious band to make a major musical statement. He suggested having Greg Lake [later of Emerson, Lake & Palmer] on bass and vocals. We began rehearsing in January of 1969.

KM: Did the band achieve notoriety and attract label interest automatically?

MG: Yes, and it was quite surprising to go from rehearsing in a small basement under a cafe in Fulham Park to having managers, and all the rest. We were amazed at how it all snowballed. We played all the clubs of the time—The Speakeasy, The Cromwellian. There was no contrivance for the "top of the charts." *In The Court Of The Crimson King* went top ten. "Cat Food" came out as a single in 1970, with "Groon" as the B-side.

KM: In "21st Century Schizoid Man" from *Epitaph,* you played very fast triplet rolls between the bass drum and tom-toms. Was that inspired by Elvin?

MG: I don't think so. It was just my attitude to the way I hear drums. What's interesting to me about all those different versions on *Epitaph* is the way the drums could be quite different on one track. I wouldn't play it the same two nights in a row. It would develop night to night.

KM: On "In The Court..." you and Greg Lake would play very staccato in the rests—almost mechanically, but still very emotionally. You're pushing the edge of the bar with your phrasing, slamming the cymbals....

MG: We were pushing, but I also like to play with the spaces as well. It's not about being busy all the time, but rather about finding some different way of using the space. If it's a two-bar break, it doesn't have to be all filled up. I'm very interested in spaces and gaps and timing. I find it fun. It's only music; it's not going to hurt anyone.

KM: On "Moonchild," from *In The Court...,* it sounds like you took a percussionist's approach.

MG: Yes. While I do enjoy dynamic playing, I also enjoy peaceful, meditative, "mantra" playing as a balance to all the aggressive and energetic stuff. "Moonchild" was relatively peaceful, but still improvised. Gentle, flowing improvisation.

KM: What kind of drums did you play then?

MG: A white pearl Ludwig double bass setup. It was a pretty simple kit compared to what I'm using now. I've got about eight

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KM: Why did that incarnation of Crimson come to an end after *In The Wake Of Poseidon?*

MG: Touring America for seven weeks really took its toll.

KM: Don't blame *us* now....

MG: [laughs] It could have been anywhere. It was such a meteoric rise that it took us all by surprise. We needed a rest. Our directions were changing musically as well. Ian and I wanted to do something more gentle, so we formed McDonald & Giles [who released a self-titled album on Cotillion featuring Steve Winwood].

I was particularly conscious of getting away from the blues format, which many big groups of the time were heavily basing their music on. In King Crimson, we were using a big band influence, but it wasn't big band music—just as we were using a jazz element, but you couldn't call it jazz-rock either. A lot of people called it "progressive," which is another strange word I can't get used to. I just call it dangerous, or adventurous.

After that, Ian went to New York and joined Foreigner. I began having more kids and playing sessions in the '70s and '80s. I must have made thirty or forty albums.

KM: What are some of those albums?

MG: *Wise After The Event* by Anthony Phillips, who was the original guitarist in Genesis. A couple with Jackson Heights—that was Lee Jackson of the Nice. A couple of very good albums with John G. Perry produced by Rupert Mine.. .most of this has been well documented on the Japanese versions of the records. I also worked with George Martin, Michael Nyman, Paul McCartney, Kevin Ayers, Penguin Cafe Orchestra...even Neil Sedaka, who's a very nice man to work with. Session work was very frustrating at times, but I wanted to be with my family. In the '80s I did a lot of soundtrack work as well.

KM: You recently recorded a soundtrack album called *Ghost Dance* with David Cunningham and percussionist Jamie Muir, who worked with King Crimson on *Larks' Tongues In Aspic.* What set did you play on that album?

MG: It's almost like a triplet kit, but not necessarily to be played all at once. In fact, two drummers could play it. I've always been interested in making rhythm and percussion sound—how can I say it—like several people instead of one. I'm not using a snare drum as a main ingredient. That's out for me.

KM: That's how "Moonchild" sounds: The snares are off, and the cymbals sound as important as the drums.

MG: It's something that has been a part of me all these years. Some of it is heard on the John Perry albums, some on the newer album with Jamie Muir. I like working spontaneously and seeing what happens.

Right now I'm involved with a percussion orchestra that also has vocals, keyboards, flute, and bass. Since the '80s I've been more interested in primitive music, meaning primitive and naive: raw percussion like kitchen sinks, paint tins, all sorts of garden percussion, industrial percussion, anything that with overdubbing or other players creates a conversation in percussion. However dangerous music is, it's not going to hurt anyone unless you're in a really dark band that bites the heads off baby chickens. So why not break out and do something with it?

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RECORDINGS

Jack DeJohnette
Oneness (ECM)
Φ Φ Φ Φ ½
drummer: Jack DeJohnette
percussionist- Don Alias
with Jerome Harris (gtr, bs), Michael Cain (pno)

Steve Khan
Got My Mental (Evidence)
Φ Φ Φ ½
drummer: Jack DeJohnette
percussionists: Don Alias, Bobby Allende, Marc Quinones, Cafe
with John Patitucci (bs), Steve Khan (gtr)

Chris Potter
Unspoken (Concord)
Φ Φ Φ Φ
drummer: Jack DeJohnette
with Chris Potter (sx), John Scofield (gtr), Dave Holland (bs)

Jack DeJohnette is unsurpassed when it comes to making music on a drumset; his thirty years of relentless recording, gigging, and musical experimentation with the best musicians in the world prove that. Three recent recordings reemphasize Jack's unique voice.

Steve Khan's *Got My Mental,* on which DeJohnette is accompanied by a sharp array of percussionists, is the most conservative of these recordings, offering mostly straight-ahead swing or Latin jazz. Standout tracks are the up-tempo "Paraphernalia" and the lovely "I Have Dreamed," the former showcasing Jack's unique approach to swing, the latter a lesson in how a drummer can be subtle while still blowing your mind. Jack sets the tone for the whole record on these cuts, supporting the percussionists and the formidable arrangements while still retaining his individuality.

Chris Potter's material allows for a bit more interplay within the group and the structures of the songs. The album opens with "Wistful," a Potter original that would have fit on any early Coltrane classic, and Jack supports this mid-tempo ballad with a flurry of brushes that only Philly Joe Jones or Elvin Jones could approach. The album then takes a more daring turn with the wide-open "Seven Eleven," featuring a drum solo over a complex ostinato that will leave you breathless. The rest of the album is equally wonderful, featuring a playful tango, a tranquil and turbulent free-form improv, a colorful ballad, and several standout drum solos and textures.

DeJohnette's own *Oneness* is the most daring, unusual, and fascinating of these three CDs. Uncategorizable as "jazz" by any of the traditional or contemporary definitions, it is simply a masterful work composed of musical freedom, space, texture, interplay, and ambition. Along with Don Alias on hand drums and percussion, Jack creates numerous rhythmic landscapes over which the group feels its way through loose arrangements—swelling and receding, beginning and ending only when the time is right. The effect can be absolutely hypnotic, and it's almost as if the entire record is centered around Jack's ride cymbal. There are maybe three or four drummers in history who could pull that off. Do yourself a favor and find out why Jack DeJohnette is one of them.

Ted Bonar

Paul Wertico & Gregg Bendian
BANG! (Truemedia Jazzworks)
Φ Φ Φ Φ ½
drummers: Paul Wertico and Gregg Bendian

Could an album featuring "only" two drummers really expect to sell units and/or be appreciated by the general music public? Well, based on some of the explosive, cohesive music on *BANG!,* why not?

It is fascinating listening to all the resultant colors and rhythms that Wertico and Bendian's intertwining parts produce. It is also mesmeriz-

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

Drummer **PHIL RUDD** supplied the perfect 4/4 hammer for AC/DC's lowest-common-denominator rock 'n' roll, as the five-disc *Bonfire* box (EastWest) gloriously illustrates. Lots of rare and live cuts, the complete *Back In Black* album, and a thousand reasons to smash your favorite hotel room.

Seely may have that pristinely controlled British version of indie pop down cold, but these Americans find plenty of room to insert enticing shades and dynamics into their new CD, *Seconds* (Too Pure). Drummer **ERIC TAYLOR** scores very high points for keeping his parts strong and varied without sounding too twee or "look-at-me!"

Loud (um, *very* loud), fast (er, *very* fast), and sacrilegious (that's your call), Deicide's latest, *Serpents Of The Light* (Roadrunner), features **STEVE ASHIEM** testing the strength of wood, metal, and eardrums in ways rarely imagined by mere mortals.

Falling somewhere between James Bond soundtracks and hardcore sits Bottom 12. On their new one, *Balderdash* (Strap On Records), Drummer **JOHN MONTGOMERY** steadily holds down the vibe, while J.P. Blackmon and lead vocalist John Beeloo add various manner of percussive dissonance to the mix. *(PO Box 4258, Malibu, CA 90264, (310) 589-5061)*

Guitar great Jim Hall has been hiding something from us: He's also an ace composer/arranger, as proven by *Textures,* a five-star CD featuring formats from strings to brass quintet. Drummer **TERRY CLARKE** handles the eclectic arrangements with sensitivity and grace. *(Telarc)*

Rating Scale
Φ Φ Φ Φ Φ Excellent
Φ Φ Φ Φ Very Good
Φ Φ Φ Good
Φ Φ Fair
Φ Poor

ing when you separate the speakers and hear what each drummer is doing, specifically to how these talented and daring players are listening and reacting to each other. Standout cuts include "Ballad," a rich melodic canvas featuring Wertico repeating a chant on tuned cowbells and timp-tom as Bendian lays into the drumkit and "prepared cymbals." "Scarlet Constellations" comes in sections and highlights cowbells with dampened vibes, bells, and Wertico's thundering drums. And "Worn March" is a very funky cadence that goes places you'd never imagine. But the tour de force here may be "Titlewaive," a majestic combination of wide-open drums and otherworldly bells. BANG! indeed. *(PO Box 24543, Cleveland, Ohio 44124, tel: [216] 691-0700, fax: [216] 691-9210)*

Robin Tolleson

The Tony Williams Lifetime

(Turn It Over) (Verve)

drummer: Tony Williams

with Jack Bruce (bs, vcl), John McLaughlin (gtr, vcl), Khalid Yasin, aka Larry Young (org, vcl)

Released between Miles Davis's *Bitches Brew* and Mahavishnu Orchestra's *Inner Mounting Flame, (Turn It Over)* sounds like a wrecking crew blasting through an unwilling mountain of galvanic straight-ahead jazz, lurching acid rock, eerie space music, and spoken-word weirdness. Finally released on CD, the follow-up to Lifetime's debut, *Emergency!,* exudes the uneven, chaotic, and brilliant nature of Tony Williams' harried mindset in 1970.

Featuring perhaps the truest amalgam of jazz and rock players ever—a post-Cream Jack Bruce, a pre-Mahavishnu John McLaughlin, and organist Larry Young—the band's hurly-burly assault is fired by Williams' lean, staccato, fireball drumming.

"To Whom It May Concern" savagely mauls a blues shuffle, with Tony's pounding hi-hat/bass drum pulse balancing the track between cerebral floating and explosive riffing. Williams recites lyrics flatly in "This Night This Song" and Jobim's "Once I Loved," seemingly with the intent of driving vermin from any home. But on Trane's "Big Nick" he lays down the blazing flams and jabbing rolls that are now part of the fusion drumming repertoire, while on "Vuelta Abajo" he flies over cymbals and toms in a melee of drumming euphoria.

Want to hear the roots of Chambers, Colaiuta, Cobham, and Carter Beauford? *(Turn It Over)* shows the method to Tony Williams' madness, and the legacy it left behind.

Ken Micallef

Bozzio, Levin, Stevens

Black Light *Syndrome* (Magna Carta)

drummer: Terry Bozzio

with Tony Levin (bs), Steve Stevens (gtr)

Black Light Syndrome was recorded in four days by musicians who had previously never performed together. Each was somewhat familiar with the others' styles, but uncertain of the chemistry; happily, the outcome is a statement of cooperation, intelligent musicianship, and sensitive musical creation.

The evidence is in each and every spontaneous track. Though guitarist Stevens shows extreme versatility of stylistic challenges, and bassist Levin (King Crimson) finds the appropriate foundation for each vision that manifests at a moment's notice, there are actually more textures explored here than improvisational displays. The various compositions, which suggest Zappa, the Police, and King Crimson in sound and feel, give Bozzio plenty of room to create interesting patterns and tom-tom melodies along with his trademark cymbal-accent rhythms. Most notably, "Dark Corners" and the opening piece, "The Sun Road," allow the drummer to conduct a clinic on improvising creatively within the melodic structure.

Bozzio shows no signs of slowing down in his intensity and determination to explore new ideas on the drumkit. This collection of unrehearsed instrumental communication is an example of music as an art form in its purest state.

Mike Haid

X

Beyond And Back: The X Anthology (Elektra)

drummer: D.J. Bonebrake

with Xenene Cervenka: (vcl), John Doe (bs, vcl), Billy Zoom (gtr)

Formed in 1978, X was fronted by three of the Los Angeles punk scene's most compelling performers—singer Exene Cervenka, singer/bassist John Doe, and guitarist Billy Zoom—but their place in rock history would not have been secure without drummer D.J. Bonebrake. No matter how liquor-soaked the drama up front became, Bonebrake was unflinching as X's backbone. Yet he was fully capable of stealing the show, dramatically punctuating songs like "Because I Do" and "Real Child Of Hell," and adding powerful double tom beats, as on "Hungry Wolf."

Like the band itself, this X anthology is extraordinary. Comprised mostly of rarities and remixes, it includes early demos, rehearsals, and live performances, along with select cuts from their ten-album career. The liner notes alone are worth the price of admission, chronicling X's career, personal lives, and vast influence as seen by their peers, including Henry Rollins, the Go-Go's, and Jakob Dylan. Bonebrake's personal legacy lies in his pushing the very limits of punk drumming, incorporating elements of jazz, honky tonk, and country shuffles into the power chord-based songs. Supported by his versatile playing, X pulled off their appropriation of different styles of music with apparent ease—which is what set them apart from every other band on the original punk scene.

Meredith Ochs

Fredrik Thordendal's Special Defects

Sol Niger Within (Ultimate Audio Entertainment)

drummer: Morgan Ågren

with Fredrik Thordendal (gtr, bs, synth, vcl), Mats Oberg (kybd), Jonas Knutsson (sx), others

Not for the squeamish, *Sol Niger Within* is an unrelenting assault on the senses, pairing snarlingly bleak lyrics with crushing guitar riffs and atmospheric noise. The continuous music does not feature individual "songs," but rather an ever-mutating flow of compositional ideas, sort of like a post-modern *Thick As A Brick* on bad acid. As brutal as this Swedish neo-space metal is, sax, organ, and well-chosen quiet moments help make it richly textured.

The Herculean efforts of timekeeper Morgan Ågren are to be applauded, for he finds direct yet creative ways to mark Thordendal's disorienting odd-meter progressions without ever sacrificing brute force. His parts show that he is as adept playing prog-rock and avant-jazz as he is full-on metal, while his sound is a hard-hitting drummer's dream: a deep, popping snare and scores of huge, thundering toms contrasted by a clear and bright ride cymbal.

Pretentious liner notes aside (including quotes from philosophers, writers, and religious leaders), *Sol Niger's* distinct take on thrash is a worthy alternative for those who like it rough but are disenchanted by current heavy offerings. *(Box 345, S-871 27, Harnosand, Sweden, fax: 46(0) 611 241 36, Web: www.itv.se/uae, e-mail: uae@com.itv.se)*

Michael Parillo

Ghazal

Lost Songs Of The Silk Road (Shanachie)

tabla player: Swapan Chaudhuri
with Kayhan KaJhor (kamancheh),
Shujaat Hussain Khan (sitar)

They sought improvisatory common ground between Indian and Persian classical styles, but achieved much more. The resulting first-time session between these three masters delivers a moving, immediate universality. The trio builds short motifs over long periods with a restraint and interactive intuition that is an astonishing and inspiring lesson for all instrumentalists.

Kalhor, the trio's master of Persian classical music, weaves the haunting, plaintive kamancheh (ancient Iranian "spike fiddle") seamlessly into the Indian timbre of Khan's soulful sitar and Chaudhuri's tabla rhythm-waves. Westerners may know Chaudhuri's tabla wizardry from his work with greats like Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan. Although his work with those artists treated rhythm-lovers with sustained episodes of intense, rapid-fire technique, this CD is especially compelling for revealing his skills for thematic sculpturing and economy; it's more about the mind than the hands. On the first cut, Chaudhuri chooses to not contribute one note for a full nine minutes. When he enters at the ideal moment, it's majestic. From there, it blooms and blooms.

Jeff Potter

Day In The Life

Day In The Life (TVT)

drummer: John Kamoosi
with George Reynolds (vcl), Josh DeMarco (vcl, gtr),
Blunt (gtr), Kris Fleischmann (bs)

Somewhere between less-is-more and more-is-best is the inventive, energetic drumming of John Kamoosi, whose refreshing approach to rhythm steers Day In The Life into the sort of lush sonic territory rarely traversed by thrash metal bands.

Day In The Life is intriguingly unconventional, featuring two lead singers—often within the same song—whose vocals are a textural, melodic contrast to the crunchy, staccato guitars underneath. Kamoosi is the dependable rock in the middle, neither laying back nor overplaying, instead painting aggressive undercoats and hammering them home from start to finish.

On "Rise," Kamoosi at first pummels us with a creative beat in 5/4, then dishes up a tribal tom-and-cymbal break in straight time before the band finishes us off with more odd-time bliss. And when the tunes aren't in odd time, Kamoosi fakes you out with delicious, off-the-beat snare strokes and faux downbeats.

Day In The Life is notable, though, as much for *how* they play as what they play. You can hear the hunger and conviction in every bar, an energy no amount of production or engineering can manufacture. It's a pretty safe bet that Day In The Life puts on a heck of a live show. And while they're certainly thrasher-friendly, don't lock them into a stereotype. Given the time and the audience, Day In The Life could help expand the very boundaries of this genre.

Matt Peiken

BOOKS

The Jack De Johnette Collection

edited by Rick Mattingly
transcribed arrangements by Steve Korn

(Hal Leonard)

level: advanced
$19.95

This group of fourteen transcribed Jack DeJohnette compositions opens with a detailed biography of the drummer's prolific

VIDEOS

Mozambique, Volume 1

with Kirn Atkinson

(PulseWave Percussion)

$30,60 minutes
level: intermediate to advanced

Instructional videotapes, a marketing novelty only a few years ago, have recently assumed the force of a tidal wave. Yet while quantity is ever increasing, quality is hit & miss.

West Coast percussionist and teacher Kim Atkinson's first video release, *Mozambique, Volume 1,* arrives in time to restore consumer confidence in off-the-shelf learning resources. Neither a celebrity jam session nor a study of burning conga chops, this well-crafted instructional package aims to make drum students of any persuasion fluent in the language of an essential Afro-Cuban carnival rhythm.

Although very popular in Europe, authentic "roots" mozambique has remained relatively unknown in the US, Thanks to cold war politics, we have heard only the "New York mozambique" style of Eddie Palmieri and others, But the Cuban original is a whole different animal, a funky parade groove built from the bottom up with bombos (marching bass drums), bells, congas, and the ever-present clave. The rhythm's Cuban creator, Pello el Afrokan, offered Atkinson an extended tutorial in Havana some years back, so the information presented here is truly first-hand,

Chart learners will enjoy the enclosed booklet that lays out the full notation; workshop learners can key on the spoken "gn, go, pa" drum language; and players of every skill level will appreciate the "once again—slowly" approach to the intricate rhythmic layers. *Mozambique, Volume 1* is presented skillfully and patiently by a veteran instructor whose guiding principle is that every learner deserves to "get it." This will be a hard act to follow, but rumor has it that *Volume 2* is already in the works.

Bill Kiely

career. From there it states that the collection is based on the recorded versions of the compositions, including background figures, comping patterns, harmony parts, sequencer ostinatos, bass lines, and drum grooves. DeJohnette comments on each tune, describing the inception of the musical ideas, many of which were inspired by artists he has worked with, including "Herbie's Hand Cocked," "Ahmad [Jamal] The Terrible," "Milton [Nascimento]," "Monk's Plumb," and "Where Or Wayne [Shorter]." The parts for drums as well as the other instruments are well written and easy to read, and are designed to be followed together (as a conductor's score).

Obviously this is not just an educational drum book. *Collection* is aimed at (and should work well for) advanced performance groups or individual artists interested in this musically complex material. However, since the author's intentions were to also inspire new interpretations that allow for self-expression, it would have been enormously helpful to have included a CD or cassette of the tunes; newcomers would have to find the recordings and familiarize themselves with the original concept, feel, and overall sound. But anyone already familiar with the music should enjoy dissecting the compositions; for the serious DeJohnette fan, here is a great opportunity to cop some of Jack's licks note-for-note.

Mike Haid

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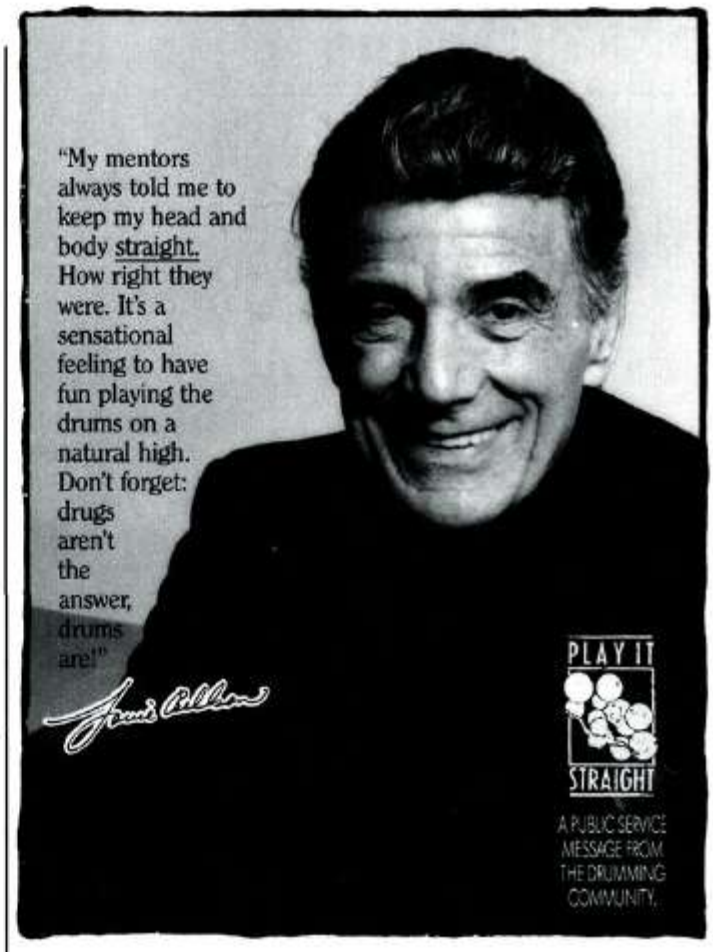
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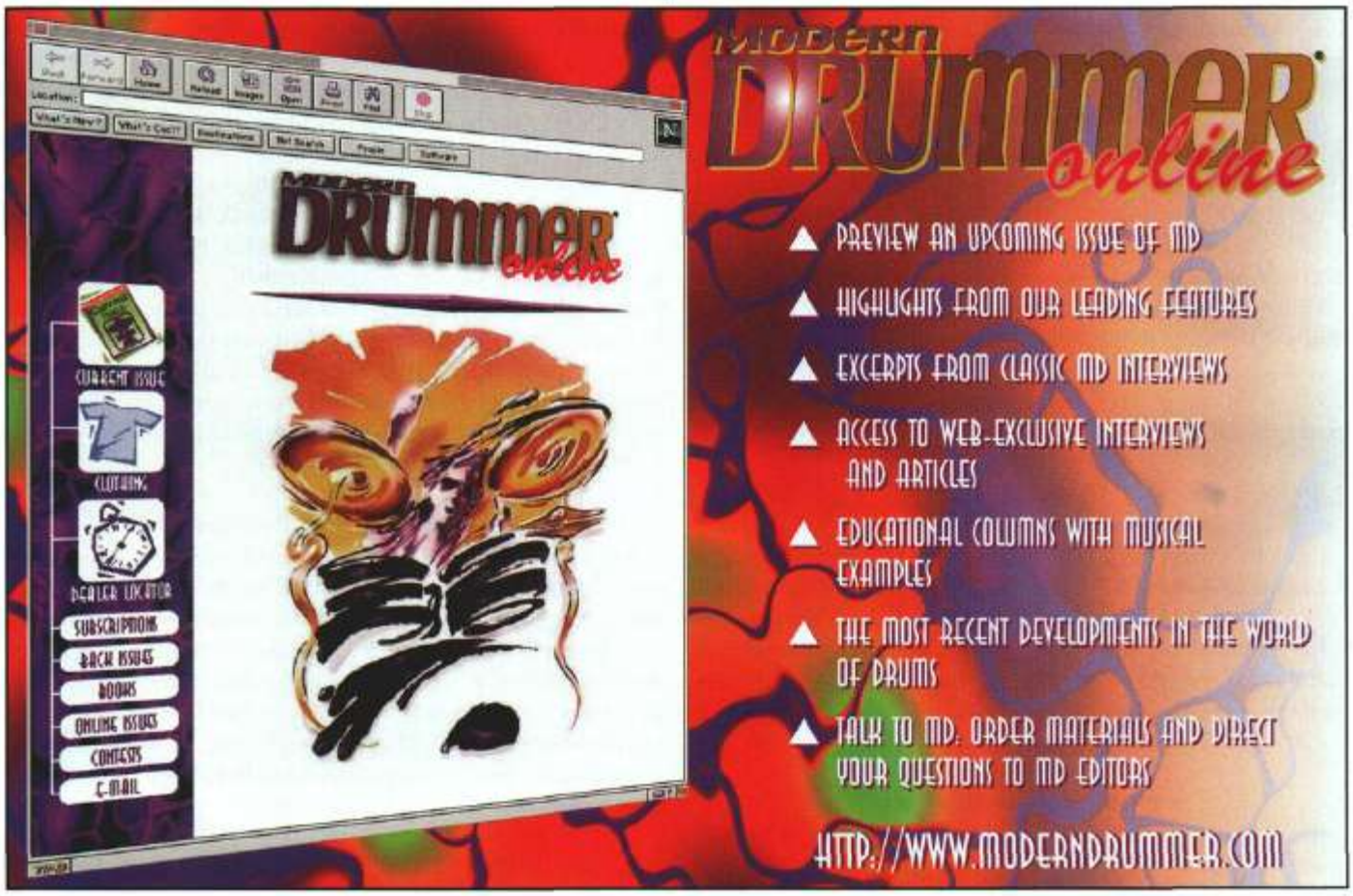


Power To The People

by Matt Peiken

Whoever coined the phrase "Power To The People" certainly couldn't have dreamed of anything as funky as the Internet. But for all the billion-dollar corporations pushing and squeezing the Net for all its economic potential, the World Wide Web has probably meant more to millions of everyday folks with home pages.

As it happens, a lot of those regular Joes and Janes with home pages are drummers. Not stars. Not anyone we know. Just people who, for whatever reason, think *someone* out there might be interested in what they're doing. Well, take heart Joe and Jane. Someone *has* noticed.

I stumbled across the following sites by plugging the words "drummer," "drums," "percussionists," and "personal" into the search engines HotBot (www.hotbot.com) and Excite (www.excite.com). By no means are these the only drummers with their own home pages. If you've got a site worth mentioning, let me know through e-mail. In the meantime, surf some of this wave:

Chris Milillo
(www.bestweb.net/~cmilillo/)

Through the "personal" area of his site, I found out Chris teaches at the Mike Risko Music Studio in Ossining, New York. Click on other buttons to check out his equipment and a list of his favorite jazz, rock, and fusion drummers.

Milillo writes and posts an instructional column dealing with "feel vs. technical ability" and "learning by ear." There's also a notated lesson on single-stroke rolls. He also runs "The Drum Ring" (www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Venue/3150/), a collection of links to the personal Web sites for about twenty other drummers.

Dave Capogna
(web.idirect.com/~poledo/dave.html)

Copogna's page, titled "Drums & Pounding," is part of a Web site for his now-defunct Toronto-based band Poledo. "Yo! It's me, Dave. You probably know me as the guy in Poledo who wrestles Grizzly bears and drives a monster truck, but there's more to me than that," Capogna tells his fans. "I also play drums, and that's what I'm going to talk about."

Brad Henderson
(www.4drums.com/home.html)

Henderson's site mainly exists to promote his novel *Drums,* about the inner workings of a struggling rock band as seen from the drummer's stool. Interesting premise. Go to the site to read an excerpt.

From his biography, you learn that Henderson has appeared in several literary journals and that he lives, works, and plays drums in Corvallis, Oregon. Click on "The Press" for musicians' jokes and links to a few other drumming sites.

Peter Batty
(www.dedrum.demon.co.uk/skinskin/index.htm)

Peter is part of "Skin To Skin," a twenty-piece percussion ensemble from Dorset, England. His Web site focuses on the group, though you'll also find links to drumming events, workshops, gossip, groups, teachers, and other contacts throughout the UK.

Eric Miller
(wabakimi.carleton.co/~ewmiller/)

Read about Miller's setup, style, sound, and how he became interested in drumming. And while you're there, see Miller's reasoning for "Why so many bands have bad drummers." The logic ranges from interesting to highly amusing, and Eric sticks his neck out with a list of drummers he particularly can't stand.

Roberto Dani
(home.earthlink.net/~mikamusik/dani.html)

Dani is an Italian drummer who, on his Web site, says he's played with every name bandleader in Italy, including Enrico Pieranunzi, Paolo Fresu, Enrico Rava, Furio di Castri, and Enzo Pietropaoli, and internationally with Mick Goodrick, Kenny Wheeler, and Richard Galliano. He's most known, he adds, for his work with the band Devil Doll. In the discography, you can hear a few *RealAudio* samples of his work with Mika Pohjola.

DrummerGirl
(www-personal.umich.edu/~dlichaw/dgirl/)

While I couldn't find a personal page put up by any female drummers, I did happen upon this site, which lists brief bios of dozens of female drummers, along with links to their bands' Web sites.

DrummerGirl features interviews and a "licks" section with detailed sticking patterns for the conga and djembe, along with hand-scrawled rock notations. You'll also find links to other music and drumming sources, only some of which are related exclusively to women. Register on the bulletin board to hook up and jam with other musicians.

You can reach Matt Peiken at mapeiken@pioneerplanet.infi.net.

SPEAK OUT: Best Drum Clinics

Modern Drummer Online *(at www.moderndrummer.com) features a section called "Speak Out," where drummers are invited to give their opinions on various drum-related topics. This month's topic on best drum clinics inspired a big response from people who had some interesting things to say not only about clinics, but about some of the clinicians they've seen. Here are just a few of the comments we received.*

I have memories of two outstanding clinics. The first was in Hollywood in 1976. It was with Jeff Porcaro, Louie Bellson, and John Guerin, and it was sponsored by Synare. (Remember those electronic drums?) Porcaro, Bellson, and Guerin all came out for a smokin' drum trio with Bellson's Big Band! When Jeff Porcaro kicked it into hyperdnvc, the audience (which included Karen Carpenter and Reggie Jackson) went wild!

The second great clinic was in 1981 with Ed Shaughnessy. Ed talked a lot about reading, big band, the *Tonight Show,* and of course playing. But after the clinic. Ed hung around for the few people who stayed. We talked about tabla and we played a bit. That was amazing!

Scott Nordell

I have to say that the best clinic I've attended was with Gregg Bissonette. It was at a suburban Chicago music store. Not only was his playing more than exceptional, I think what most impressed me was his personality and ability to explain. He really was able to relate and communicate to the audience.

What I learned most from the clinic is that drumming is not only how well you can play your instrument but how well you can relate to others in a musical or personal setting. That, to me, is an invaluable skill, and he pulled it off with great ease.

Mark Evangelista

The best drum clinic I have ever seen (and I've seen a few) was at Ithaca College last March with John Riley. The setting was very informal; there were eight drummers along with a guitarist and a bass player. John was very informative. For example, he took a few exercises from Ted Reed's *Syncopation* and proceeded to explain and demonstrate how to play it in the style of Philly Joe Jones, Tony Williams, and Elvin Jones. Many of John's demonstrations were placed in a historical context.

John played for over two hours and answered questions until everyone was satisfied. He was never in a hurry and was always genuine. This just added to what was an already fantastic clinic.

Mark Mahoney

I was fortunate to witness an entrancing clinic with Trilok Gurtu at Portland Percussion last month. Anyone who's ever heard or seen him will most certainly agree. I'll estimate that he played for forty-five minutes before he said a word. (The man could have talked for a week and it still would not have compared to the volume of things he said with his hands!) I was truly blown away with his playing and with his patience—he was on day eleven of an eleven-day tour! By far the best clinic I've been to.

Jason Ingalls

Last month there was an Atlanta DrumFest at Atlanta Drums and Percussion. I had heard of three of the guys on the bill: Gerry Brown, Richie Morales, and Lee Venters. But the fourth guy was the shocker of the day for me. His name is Brian Stephens, and he's from the Atlanta Institute of Music. (I didn't know much about the school until after seeing him and doing a little digging).

Stephens had a presentation called the "Working Drummer Clinic," and for the first time I had someone tell me what I needed to do to become one of those guys who makes their living playing music. Brian's clinic was very organized and informative. He was a great speaker and I could tell that he knew the subject really well. He also wailed on the kit!

no name given

There seems to be two kinds of drum clinics First, there are the ones where the artist tries to amaze you and keep how they do it to themselves These clinics are usually more of a show Then there are ones where the artists are there to teach They are specific and deliberate in the playing and then insist you understand how to develop it yourselt

That said the best clinic I have been to was given by Mike Porfiloy He played *and* taught the audience about what was unique about what he had played He was able to explain what he did and then give a method on how to develop it I don't even like progressive rock but I learned a lot from Mike

Joby Foley

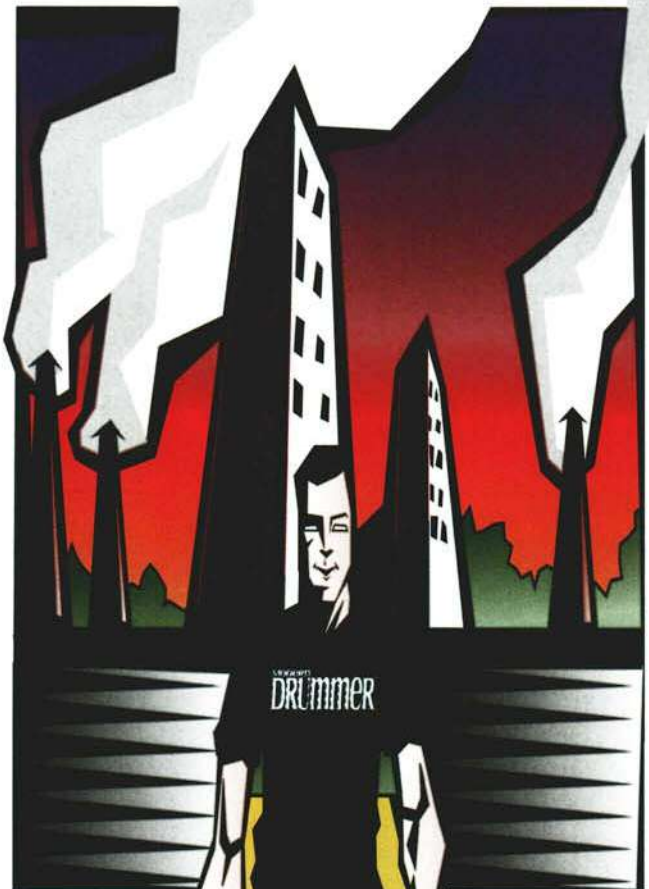
I have attended a few drum climes in my twenty years The best one was the clime that Zildjian sponsored here in my country, the Philippines, last May It featured Dennis Chambers Not only was he talent-rich, but also very funny and down-to-earth I had a great time and I'm sure that the other clinicians—Mar Dizon, Ernie Severino, Jun Regalado, and Paco Arespacochaga—did too

Clinics are a great way to learn more about our craft, have fun, meet new people, and gam further knowledge and inspiration I'm sure glad that I'm a drummer with a global brotherhood!

Jonathan Co
Manila, Philippines

Quitting Your Day Job

by Greg Thomas



Joe Weissenburger

"Don't quit your day job." A difficult comment for anyone to hear, but for those of us caught between an all-consuming love of music and the reality of paying rent, this remark might hit a particularly sensitive nerve. How do you know when it's time to commit yourself fully to your passion and leave the day job behind? The decision to leave full-time employment for a career as a professional musician requires a great deal of introspection and honest self-assessment. In this month's *Taking Care Of Business,* we'll help you ask the right questions before quitting your day job, and then suggest some strategies for surviving if you *do* decide to pursue music full-time.

Being Realistic

The first question you should ask yourself is, "What are my financial needs?" Keep track of your finances over a few months. Don't forget to assess what you spend on entertainment, including CDs, movies, drinks at a bar, or cover charges at clubs. Are you willing to go without any of these luxuries? Don't feel guilty if the answer is no. It doesn't mean a commitment to music is impossible, it just may require more creative planning.

Another important consideration is health insurance. Most full-time jobs include some kind of health insurance as a benefit. Generally, when you leave your job, the insurance ends. Some employers, however, might allow you to continue your insurance for a fixed length of time after you leave your job, for a monthly fee. If this is not an option, investigate outside health insurance plans *before* you give up that job. With the current high cost of health care, you cannot afford to risk a single day without coverage.

You may also want to allow for unexpected emergencies or expenditures that occur less frequently than once per month. You don't want to be caught short for a van repair, or for your significant other's birthday.

Next, tally your savings and other assets. In the worst case, if you lose your steady gig and are unemployed for two or three months, could you still pay the rent and eat? Relying on friends in case of emergency is not realistic for everyone. Coming to a close friend in time of need is one thing; relying on a friend to *support* you is another.

Speaking of friends, what kinds of contacts do you have? One needn't have great *connections* in the music business to begin a career, but it's essential to have contacts, especially within your own musical community. Do you know other drummers in town who might let you sub for them? Do you know bass players, in case the one in your group quits right before that showcase? It's a good idea to have contacts in several genres of music (jazz, rock, theater, classical) for that one-night gig, if you need it.

Okay, so you've got tons of contacts. But don't quit that job yet. What kinds of gigs do you have lined up for your primary group? Will that Friday night spot last indefinitely? If not, is your band likely to get another gig easily? Or is there a chance that a small snag could cause the whole project to fizzle? If

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that primary project were to disappear, would your other contacts be able to provide you with enough work?

Deciding to give up a steady paycheck may also require some serious soul searching. Ask yourself, "Will I be able to handle some instability?" It may sound very romantic to live day-to-day, but if you're the type who's incapacitated by stomach cramps when the phone bill comes and you have no money to pay it, you may need to re-evaluate the advantages of knowing another paycheck is a few days away.

It may also be beneficial to consider your long-term musical goals. Are you shooting for a Top-40 hit? Or would you be happy to participate in music even if you never attain superstardom? Will relying on playing for income *decrease* your enjoyment of music?

You may decide to quit your day job because you simply cannot *not* play music. Great. An accurate assessment of where your head and wallet are at could save you a lot of grief later. Of course, if you decide you cannot give up the stability of a regular paycheck, don't lose heart. The good news

Relocating

by Gene Houston

When you finally make that tough decision to relocate to a new city, there are a few things to consider before you do, and a few things to do once you get there.

1) Take your time. Your choice of a new city will be your new home. So choose one where you feel good about the people, as well as the musical environment. It's also helpful if you know someone already living in the area. A friend can open doors for you that might otherwise take you months to open.
2) Visit the city a few times before moving. The local chamber of commerce can help with apartment guides and a list of schools and universities. A local city map and phone book are also important to help you find recording studios, nightclubs, and music shops.
3) Get yourself financially fit. You should have *at least* enough money to live for a couple of months without any income.
4) Have a professional resume made, along with a good demo tape of your playing.
5) Have business cards made as soon as possible. Visit the local music shops and leave a card on the bulletin boards.
6) Visit the musicians union and ask for their assistance. Also check on local musician referrals, but be aware that their help may not get you in with the area's better-known musicians immediately.
7) Get out and meet people who can help you get established. Don't be pushy, but be friendly and eager to play for free if necessary, just to be heard. Leave your card with every musician you meet. You never know when someone may want to reach you later.
8) When you find out where the best local musicians are playing, get out there and *meet* them. Remember, first impressions are lasting—so make it a good one.
9) Don't get discouraged. It's easy to start questioning your decision to relocate when things aren't happening fast enough. It takes *time* to get established in any new town.
10) Be sure you're ready when you get that shot. Find a place to practice to keep your chops and confidence up. If you don't play your *very best* when opportunity knocks, it could be a major setback that'll be hard to overcome. ●

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is, in many cases, it's possible to do both, enjoying the fruits of music *and* some financial security.

Musical Considerations

Many aspiring professional musicians have an idyllic vision of waking up late, practicing all day, and then driving across town for a high-paying gig. Unfortunately, this scenario may be unrealistic for some of us, especially for the first few months (or years) after quitting our day job. First, your primary group may not generate enough income to fully support you. Second, not all of us have the determination to practice eight hours a day. Just as deciding to leave the security of a day job requires a good deal of self-assessment, determining the most productive use of those hours before and between your primary commitments demands a critical look at your interests, skills, and needs.

Practice—The amount of time you need to spend on your instrument each day is entirely dependent on you. How much time do you have available? Can you afford to rely on your evening gigs for all your income? What do you hope to accomplish from practicing? Are you intending just to maintain your current skill level, or are you looking to master new genres of music? The time you spend practicing may not generate any income, but it's an important investment in your career. For a rock player to study Brazilian beats, for example, will only increase his or her marketability as a freelancer.

Teaching—If your primary gig does not afford the luxury of spending your days solely devoted to practice, you might try teaching as a means of supplementing your income. Having a core of weekly pupils can provide some steady pay, help to organize your own musical ideas, enhance your communication skills, and allow you to share some of your enjoyment of music with others. Teaching is not for everyone, though. It requires a large degree of commitment and a good deal of preparation.

Do you have the patience to teach beginners, especially if they're children? Do you truly have something to offer more advanced players? You may also want to consider how long you'll be located in the same area, or whether you're planning to tour at all. It's not fair to your students to abruptly end weekly lessons so you can tour Europe for a year.

You may need to be creative in finding your first students. Teaching through a local music store can help to build a pool of students and may relieve the potential inconvenience of having to convert part of your living space into a teaching studio. You might also call the local schools and speak to the head of the music department. In many schools, the band director has to teach several instruments, and it's rare when the director specializes in percussion. He or she might be willing to refer some students to you for private instruction. At the very least, the school might be willing to let you post a flyer in the music room advertising your services. Meanwhile, let your musician friends know that you're teaching. Frequently, older students will come from referrals by fellow musicians. Advertising in music stores or through a newspaper may also be a worthwhile investment.

Freelancing—Another way to supplement your primary income is to take some one-time gigs in an alternative field of drumming. Your love of heavy metal need

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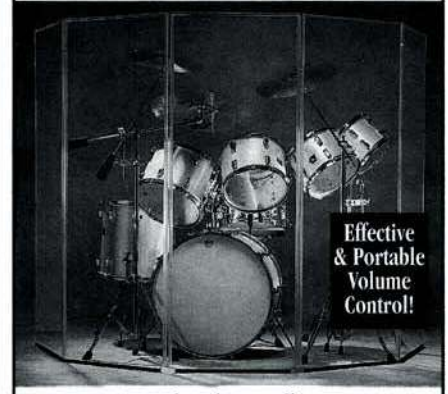
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IN THIS ISSUE...

14 Tips For The Responsible Teacher 1
Drumming Up Business 1
Beginning And Ending The Lesson 2
Screening Students 3
Finding A Voice 4
Playing For Students 5
Forward Progress 6
New Materials 7

DRUM INSTRUCTORS ONLY

—A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR SERIOUS DRUM TEACHERS—

If you teach drumming, **DRUM INSTRUCTORS ONLY** is designed to help you build a more successful teaching practice. Written *by* successful teachers *for* teachers, **DRUM INSTRUCTORS ONLY** will offer advice on new teaching concepts, address matters that affect every instructor, and supply hundreds of valuable tips for the progressive drum teacher.

Here's a small sampling of what you'll find in coming issues of **DRUM INSTRUCTORS ONLY:**

Feature articles with the country's leading teachers, transcriptions, exercises, beats, and information on important upcoming drumming events.

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- ✔ handle lateness and absences
- ✔ teach soloing
- ✔ screen students
- ✔ form an approach
- ✔ deal with older students
- ✔ promote your teaching practice
- ✔ soundproof your teaching studio
- ✔ handle makeup lessons
- ✔ set up a monthly payment schedule
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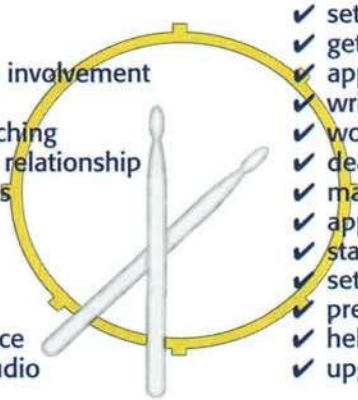
- ✔ approach the rudiments
- ✔ write a personal brochure
- ✔ work with store owners and managers
- ✔ deal with the hobbyist/student
- ✔ make more money teaching
- ✔ approach the left-handed student
- ✔ stay enthusiastic about teaching
- ✔ set up a group lesson program
- ✔ prepare for a clinic performance
- ✔ help your students select the proper gear
- ✔ upgrade your studio for the '90s



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not prevent you from taking an occasional show gig, *if you're qualified.* Freelancing can provide another source of supplemental income, and will still leave time for your primary commitment. Ask your drumming friends to call if they ever need a sub. Keep in contact with musicians outside of your band for leads.

Studio gigs—If you have what it takes to be a studio musician, this too could be a good investment in time. Unfortunately, most of the large studios are in major cities, and the competition for gigs in those areas is fierce. You may find it easier to get a studio gig in a smaller city, but the trade-off might be less opportunity for work.

Even if you're not interested in pursuing a career as a studio musician, you might still benefit by accepting an occasional studio project as you would a one-nighter. While the pay for demos or friends' projects might be small or non-existent, an occasional freebie is a deposit in the favor bank. You'd be making valuable contacts, developing your studio chops, and advertising your name and drumming ability,

Other ideas—If the money flow is still only a trickle, you may need to ask yourself how important it is for you to be *playing* all day. There are a variety of non-performing part-time positions that may be open where you can surround yourself with music, yet still have the flexibility to practice and perform regularly. Try contacting the local drum shop or music store to see if they need any help. Call the city symphony or theater company to inquire about administrative or creative support positions. Contact artist management companies or clubs to see if they're looking for someone to book bands. Though these jobs may sound like neatly disguised versions of the dreaded "day job," there are two important differences: first, they directly involve music, and second, you might make contacts relevant to your playing career.

Conclusion

A career as a professional is certainly not easy. Until your big break, or until all of your projects are off and running, plan on channeling a lot of time, energy, and creativity into keeping yourself busy and maintaining a reasonable level of existence, even if it requires some compromise. A full-time musician pursues music like a start-up business. Expect large investments at first, with potentially less-than-commensurate initial payoffs. Hopefully, if you've been honest with yourself about your interests, talents, and needs—and you have tons of perseverance—your hard work will ultimately allow you to do what you *love* for a living.

Seen the lineup yet for MD's Festival '98?
What are you waiting for?
Turn to page 151!

"STOP Practicing! It tragically does more harm than good!" *says new study . . .*

Los Angeles CA - That's the shocking result of a year of exhaustive research by a leading company.

Breakthrough research in drumming shows that 97% of drummers really have no idea how to get more speed and endurance in their chops quickly and effectively. SO. . .

Savior Inc. has responded to this research with the release of a powerful tool that formerly was drum experts' "best kept secret" for gaining Ballistic chops in a remarkably quick and effective way.

When tested, this tool, the *Chopstick*, proved incredibly effective. Of the 278 participants, Savior Inc. reported that every drummer in their study got more speed, control and better chops without spending frustrating hours behind their kits.

In analyzing why the *Chopstick* enables you to achieve awesome chops, drummers had this to say:

"I had carpal tunnel syndrome and other tendon problems with my wrists. In only 2 weeks with the Chopsticks my hands are more powerful with less fatigue. I have incresed endurance and gained speed in my rolls and double strokes!"--John Melissinos, NY

"I've been playing for over 33 years and I stay away from gimmics. But this product targets the finger muscles to produce startling results. My solo's and stamina have improved 70% with less fatigue and greater ability."--Al Silva, NH

"I was spending 1 1/2 hours a day on a practice pad and progress was slow -until now. I bought the Chopsticks on a whim and within 2 weeks I was seeing results- more speed, control and endurance. My routine on the practice pad now takes less than half as long as it used to -Amazing!"--George Peppard, MA

Awesome Chops Have Never Been Easier!

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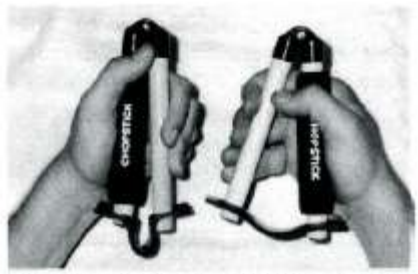

New Breakthrough In Drumming Eliminates Hours Of Frustrating Practice!

gives each hand a low impact workout, resulting in explosive fingers!

Two: It prevents Repetitive Strain Injury by strengthening the muscle fibers in your fingers and wrists (not your forearms). Play Longer & Stronger!

What drummers especially like about this product is its comfort and natural stick feel. Its' sleek, scientific light-weight design makes it conveniently pocket-sized and so easy to use, producing results in no time at all. You can work your chops any time, anywhere ***(even while driving or eating)!*** You can finally give up all those boring hours practicing chops on your drumset. Now when you're behind the set, you can get down to the real business of playing.

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Imagine How Good You'll Feel. . .

finally having awesome thunderous stick patterns without the hours of frustrating practice. After using this advanced "muscle memory" tool, you'll feel like you just loaded your hands with pure adrenaline. *Simply compress the Chopstick to provide the sensation of striking a real drum. Gaining more speed and endurance than ever thought possible!*

Never Again slow single strokes or frustration in your playing. You will outplay everybody you know by using the *Chopstick*!

However, we warn drummers that because this tool is so effective you can gain too much speed too quickly. If that happens, you should set the *Chopstick* aside for 2 or 3 days, so you can get used to your new speed.

In Conclusion

Get one *Chopstick* for $20.00, plus $3.95 S&H. **OR**, order within 30 days and get **two** (one for each hand) for **only** $36.00 and still pay only $3.95 total S&H. Send your name and address on a piece of paper along with your check or money order to: Savior Inc. 11137 E. Lynrose St. Arcadia CA 91006. To order with any credit card call: Toll Free **1-800-405-0348** 24 hrs/ 7 days a week. Outside US call (626) 447-8765

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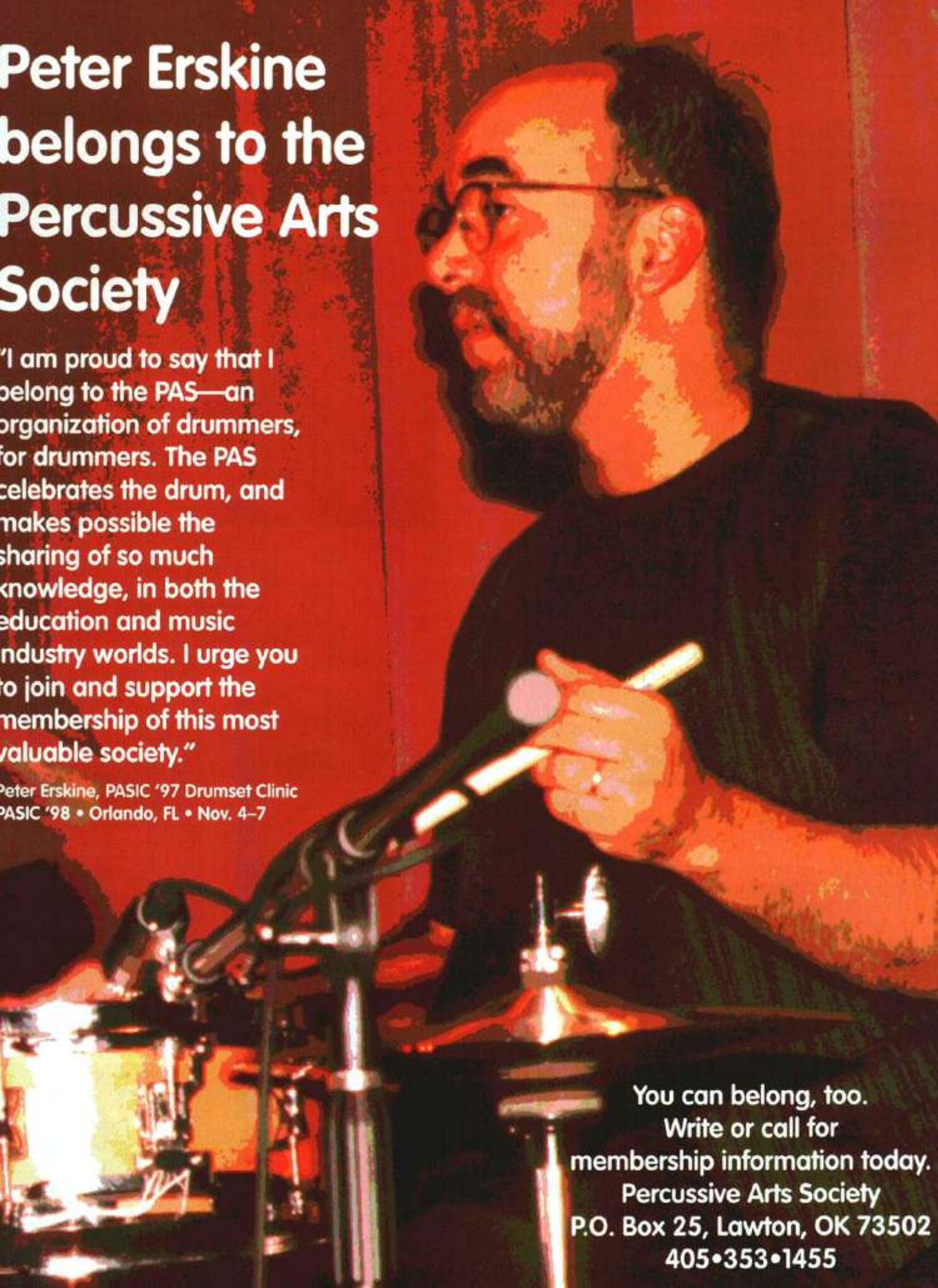

Peter Erskine belongs to the Percussive Arts Society

"I am proud to say that I belong to the PAS—an organization of drummers, for drummers. The PAS celebrates the drum, and makes possible the sharing of so much knowledge, in both the education and music industry worlds. I urge you to join and support the membership of this most valuable society."

Peter Erskine, PASIC '97 Drumset Clinic
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Mike Zographos

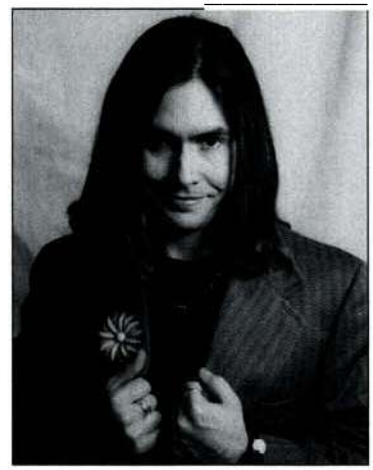
Mike Zographos, of the Bronx, New York, began his playing career at the age of twelve with two years of lessons from a talented cousin. He continued drumming through high school, playing in school shows and organizing (and drumming in) "Battles Of The Bands." In college he hooked up with a blues/rock band called Rhinocervs, a group that divides its musical time between high-speed punk/thrash and driving, near-gothic power rock. Now, five years later, the group has one 7" record on indie label Azra Records and a recently released self-produced CD called *Behind* to its credit. The CD is enjoying regional college airplay

Mike's playing on *Behind* reflects his influences, which he says come from classic rock and fusion music, along with the Greek music of his family heritage. He cites John Bonham, Tommy Aldridge, Ringo Starr, Rod Morgenstein, Omar Hakim, and Stewart Copeland as drummers important to his development, "although I've been striving for the past ten years to sound like no one except myself."

Mike's equipment includes a Ludwig "Bonham-sized" kit, Paiste and Sabian cymbals, and Pearl hardware. He plays this gear because he loves it, but he's also pragmatic about it, saying, "I'd like to endorse some of these products in the future, because for me, like a lot of drummers, sticks and cymbals are going as fast as McDonalds makes hamburgers." Mike hopes to offset expenses by increasing his gigs with Rhinocervs (and hopefully getting signed), along with developing a teaching practice.

Ned Stroh

"Mostly rock/funk...but versatile" is how Butler, New Jersey drummer Ned Stroh describes his playing style. And versatile it must be, since the twenty-eight-year-old currently tours on drum-set for surf-guitar king Dick Dale, plays congas with folk artist Geoff Martin, and handles general percussion for Lux Caritas Music recording artist Bobby Syvarth.



"When on tour with Dick, I'm playing four to six nights a week," says Ned, "in venues like Irving Plaza in New York City, and the House Of Blues in Chicago. Otherwise I play one to three times a week with the artists mentioned above—and others—in the northern New Jersey/New York City club circuit." Ned also works as a session drummer in several of New Jersey's independent recording studios, and as a pit percussionist for various local theaters.

Touring with Dick Dale has taken Ned across the US, to Brazil, and to several European countries. He's also on Dale's 1997 release *Better Shred Than Dead.* And anyone playing the SegaSoft video game *Rocket Journey* is hearing drum tracks performed by Ned.

"Every time I'm on stage or in the recording studio, there's this inner voice that says, 'This is the right place for you to be. You belong here!' There's nothing like the feeling of creating in those two areas—especially when things are sounding great."

Ned does his creating on a Pearl *Masters Custom* kit with Zildjian cymbals when touring with Dick Dale, and on a Premier *Signia* kit with Zildjian and Paiste cymbals for all other live and recording work. He also employs various Tama, Ludwig, Premier, and Slingerland snares, LP percussion, Rhythm Tech shakers, and various brands of hardware.

Marc White

You wouldn't necessarily expect to find a world beat drummer in the heart of America's dairyland. But thirty-eight-year-old Oshkosh, Wisconsin-based Marc White is just that—and then some. With extensive club, fair, benefit, and wedding experience in groups with names like Hip Pocket, Apples & Oranges, and Mighty Vumba, you can figure that Marc isn't your basic cheeseland polka drummer.

Funk, jazz, and rock are also among Marc's stylistic preferences, with the influence of Tony Williams, John Bonham, Billy Cobham, Vinnie Colaiuta, Steve Gadd, Simon Phillips, Dennis Chambers, Harvey Mason, and Zigaboo Modeliste to inspire him. His demo tape, consisting of performances with all of the above-listed groups, displays his grasp of both the fundamentals and the nuances of each style he plays. He consistently adds color and character to the foundation that he sets for each song.

Marc lists his "gear" succinctly: Yamaha, Pearl, Paiste. He states his goals in the same way: "First, I want to get to a bigger city in order to have better chances to meet and play with good musicians. Second, I want to turn those chances into a developing drumming career."

If you'd like to appear in *On The Move*, send us an audio or video cassette of your best work (preferably both solo and with a band) on three or four songs, along with a brief bio sketch and a high-quality color or black & white close-up photo. (Polaroids are not acceptable. Photos will not be paid for nor credited.) The bio sketch should include your full name and age, along with your playing style(s), influences, current playing situation (band, recording project, freelance artist, etc.), how often and where you are playing, and what your goals are (recording artist, session player, local career player, etc.). Include any special items of interest pertaining to what you do and how you do it, and a list of the equipment you use regularly. Send your material to On The Move, Modern Drummer Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Material **cannot** be returned, so please **do not** send original tapes or photos.

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(shown at left from left to right)

TS950
shown with TH684 Tom and B75 Cymbal Arm

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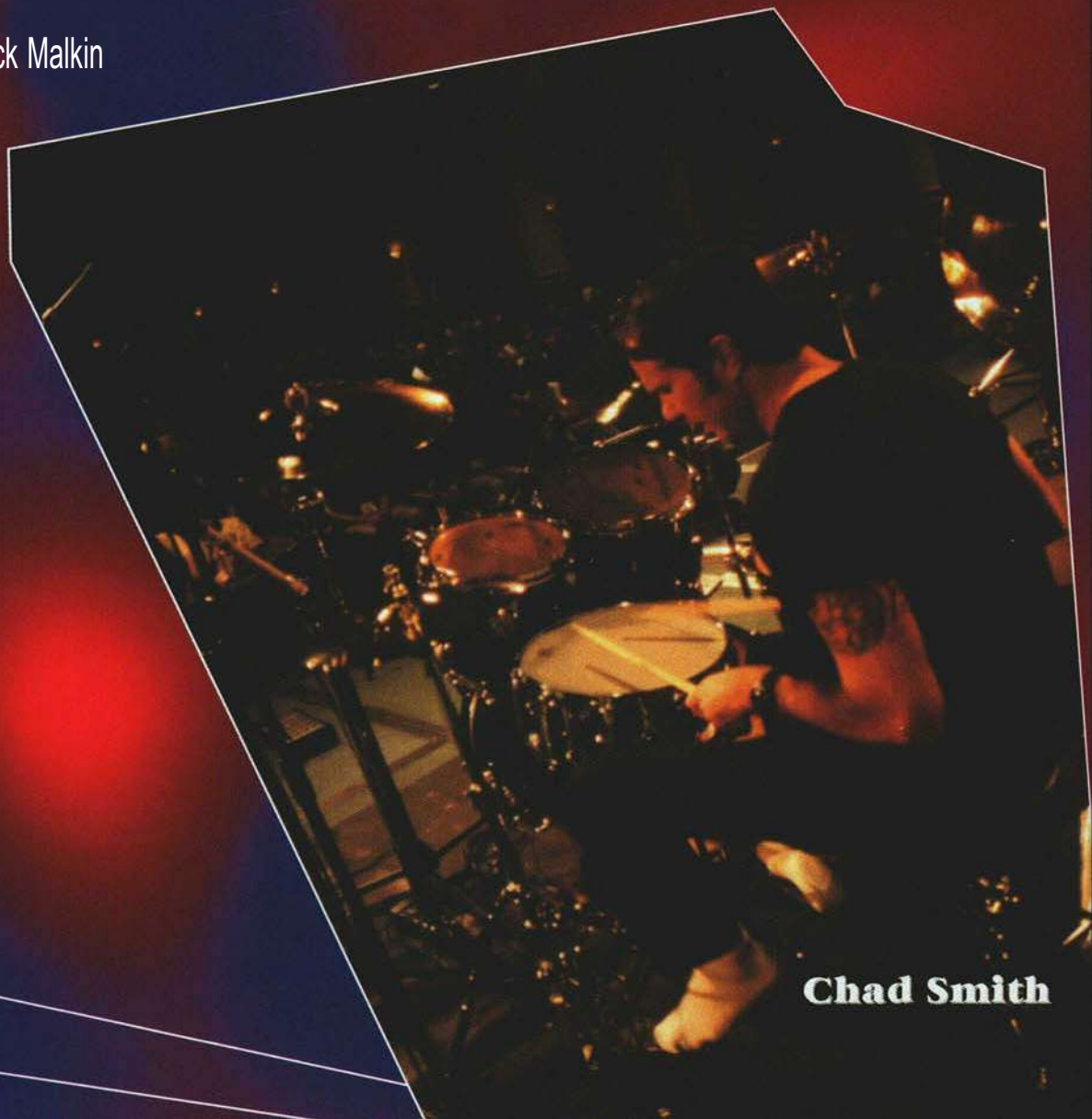
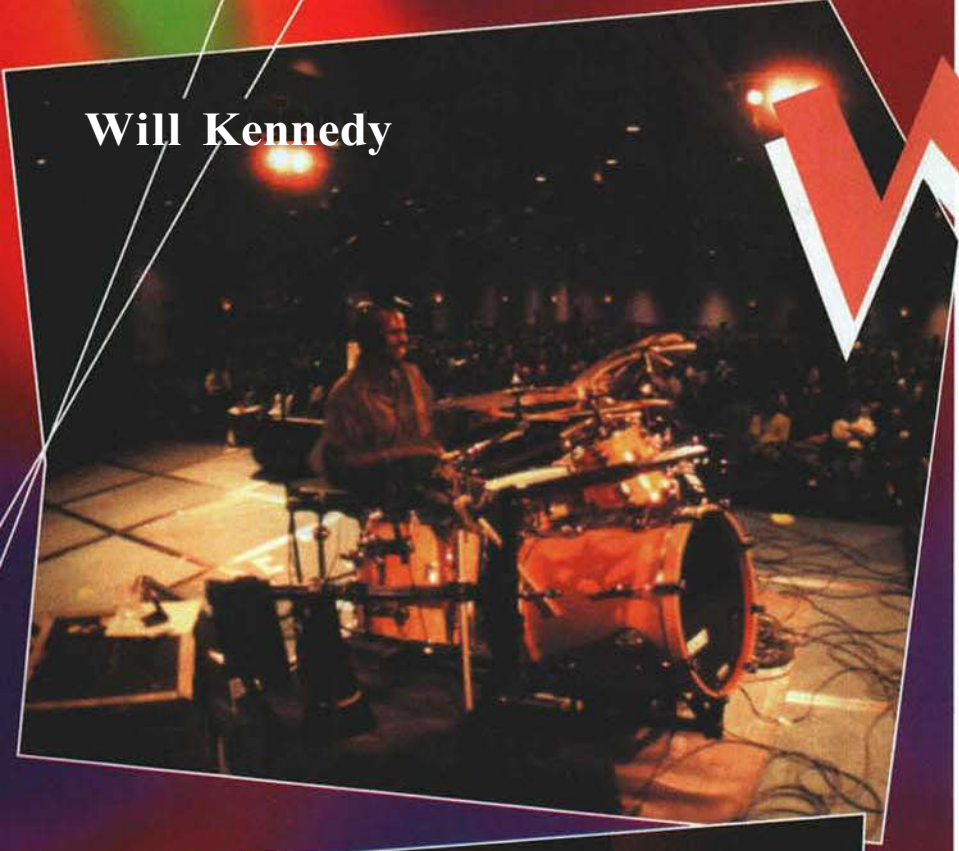
PASIC '97 In Review

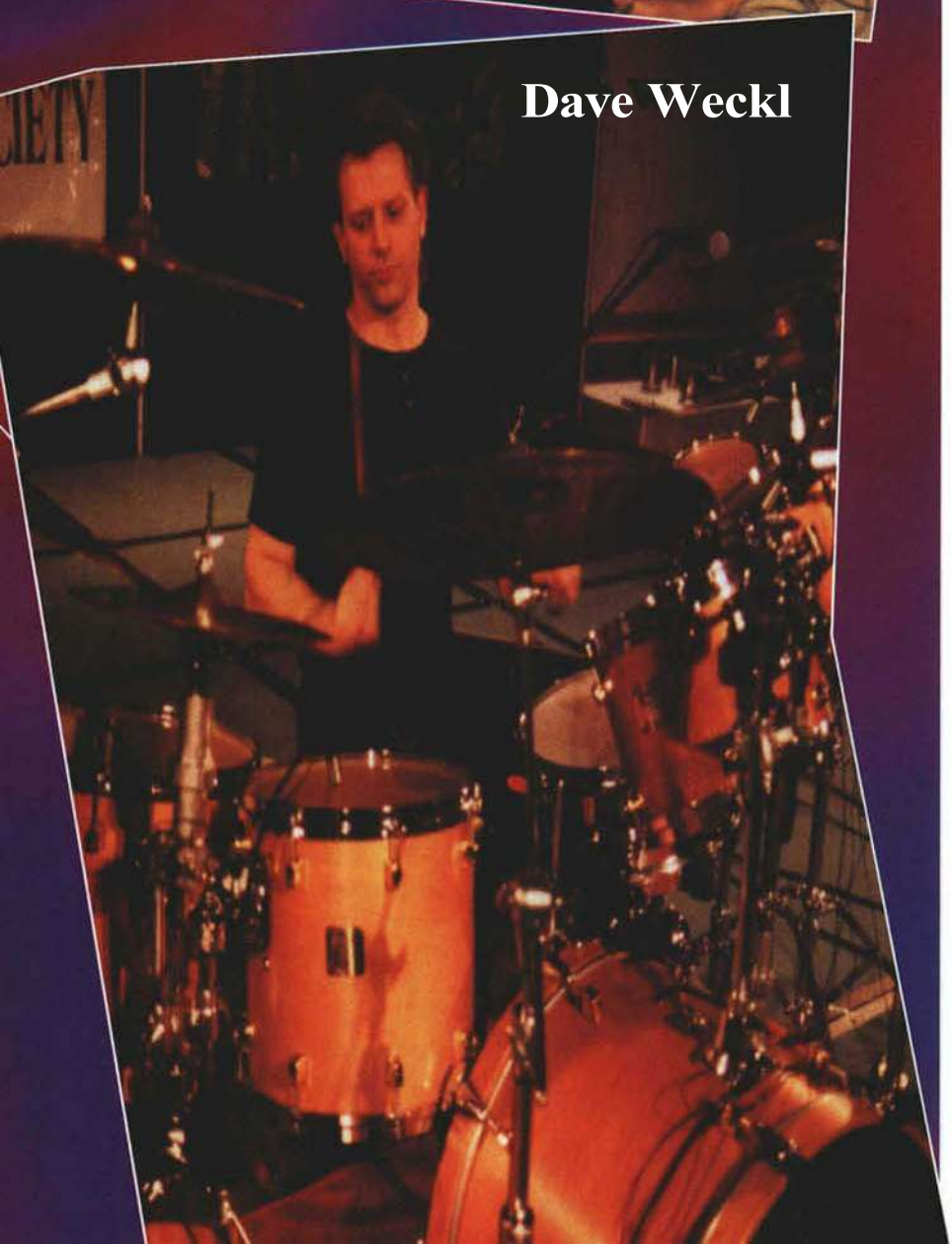
Mickey, Minnie, And Pluto On The Drums!

Photos by Rick Malkin



Chad Smith





What are you, Goofy? Last November the Percussive Arts Society held its annual convention at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, California, and while Mickey and the gang could be seen entertaining the kids around the convention, it was the drummers and percussionists in attendance who were having the most fun.

And why not? The talent roster of performing artists at the four-day event was impressive, with seemingly every aspect of percussion being covered. Clinics were given on marching percussion, doumbek, djembe, marimba, conga drum, gamelan, tambourine, talking drum, electronic percussion, udu drum, frame drum, orchestral cymbals, mallets, Scottish rudimental drums, and Irish percussion.

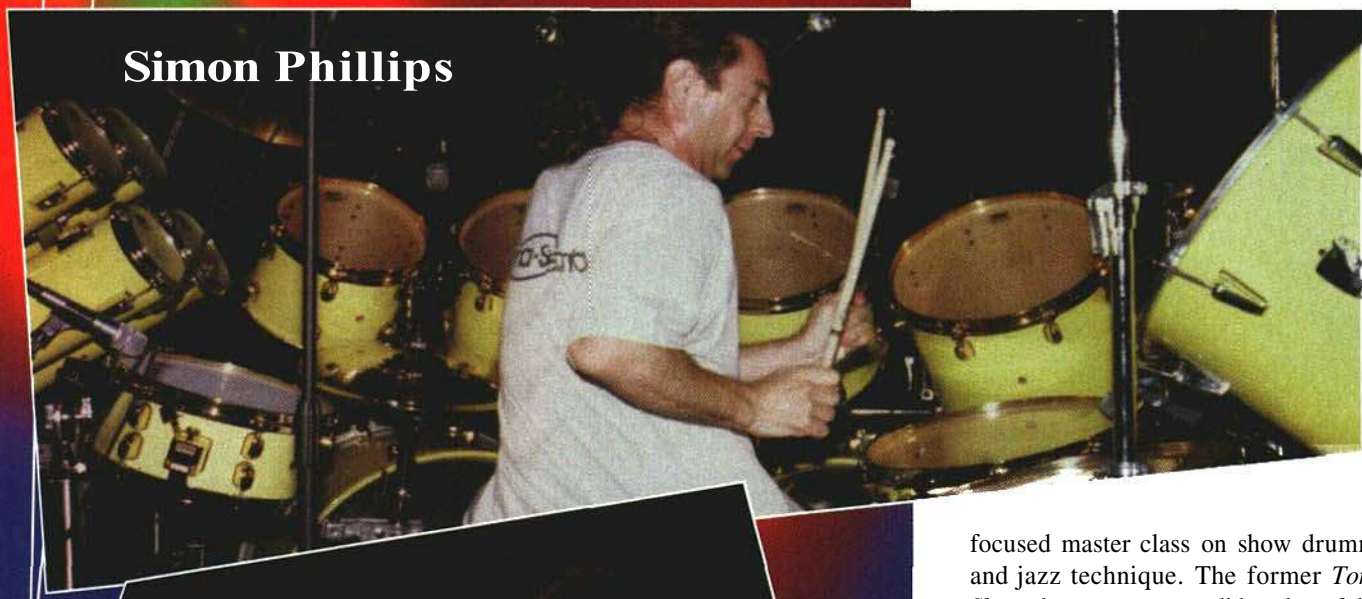
As for drumset, this year's PASIC had what seemed to be an even greater amount of kit-drumming coverage than usual. Twenty-two drumset clinics and/or master classes were given. Here's a rundown of some of the drumset highlights:

Author/educator **Jim Payne** gave a nice master class on the history of R&B drumming, focusing especially on the great James Brown drummers Clyde Stubblefield and Jabo Starks. Jim brought students up to play and had them zero in on good groove techniques, including playing ghost strokes softly and not playing the bass drum too much in time patterns.

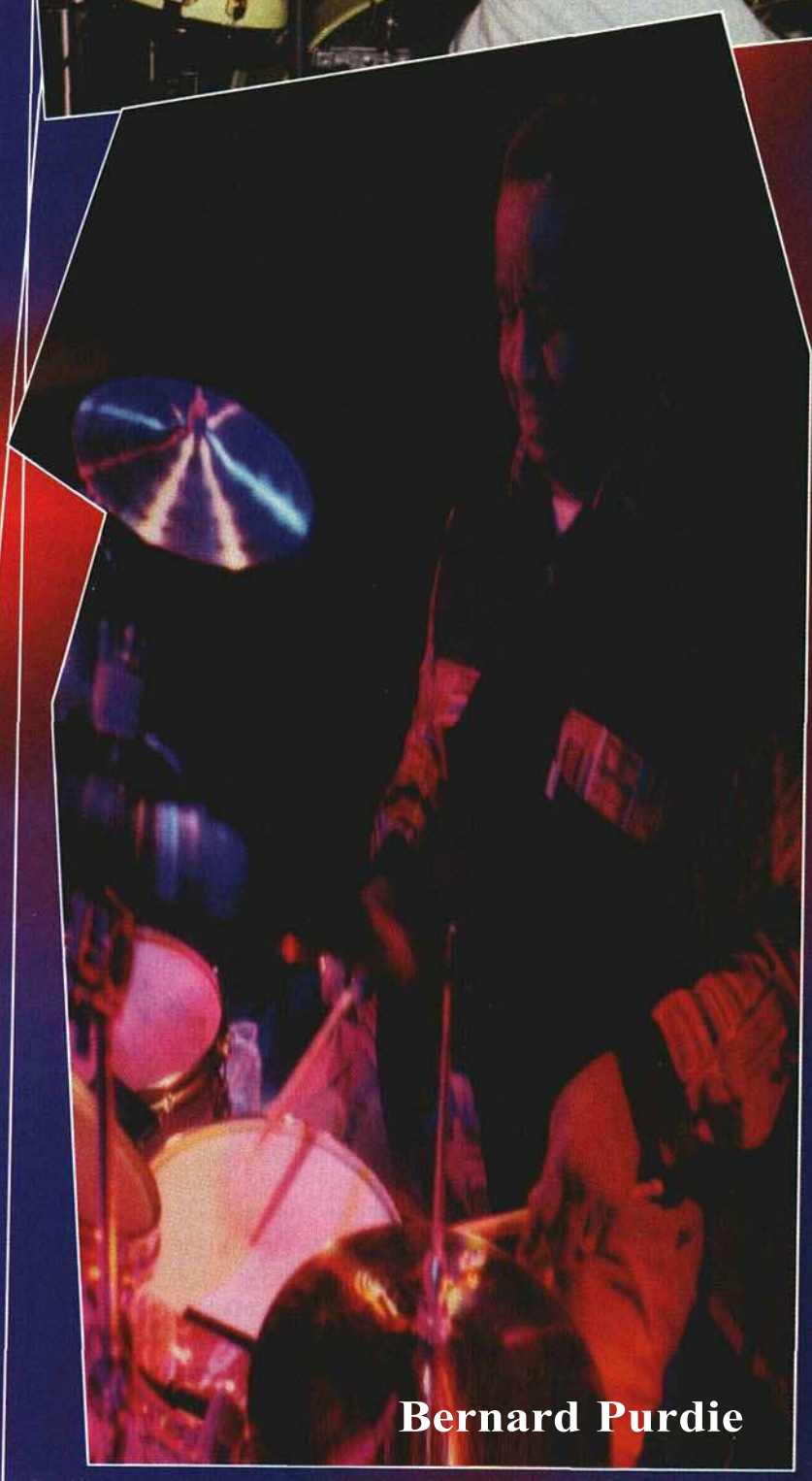
Yellowjackets drummer **Will Kennedy** simply wowed the large audience that turned out for his clinic. Will had just gotten off a tour with the Jackets, and his chops were burning. While his technique was in good form, including the cleanest single-stroke roll you'll ever want to hear, Will discussed the emotional side of drumming and "letting go" within the music. Also, Will's drumset was mounted on a DrumFrame, which made its debut at PASIC and was the talk of the show.

There's no reason that **Chad Smith** should feel compelled to perform shtick and talk down his own playing at his clinics; he can *play*. The Chili Peppers' drummer opened with an impressive solo that had some interesting moments, including getting sounds from all over the kit—cymbal edges, rims, sticks-on-kick drum, etc. His quick hands, use of dynamics, and cross-sticking chops were also happening.

Probably one of the best drumset educators on the scene, **Ed Shaughnessy** gave **a**



Simon Phillips



Bernard Purdie

focused master class on show drumming and jazz technique. The former *Tonight Show* drummer gave solid and useful tips on a range of topics, including reading, music and music stand placement, and cymbal selection.

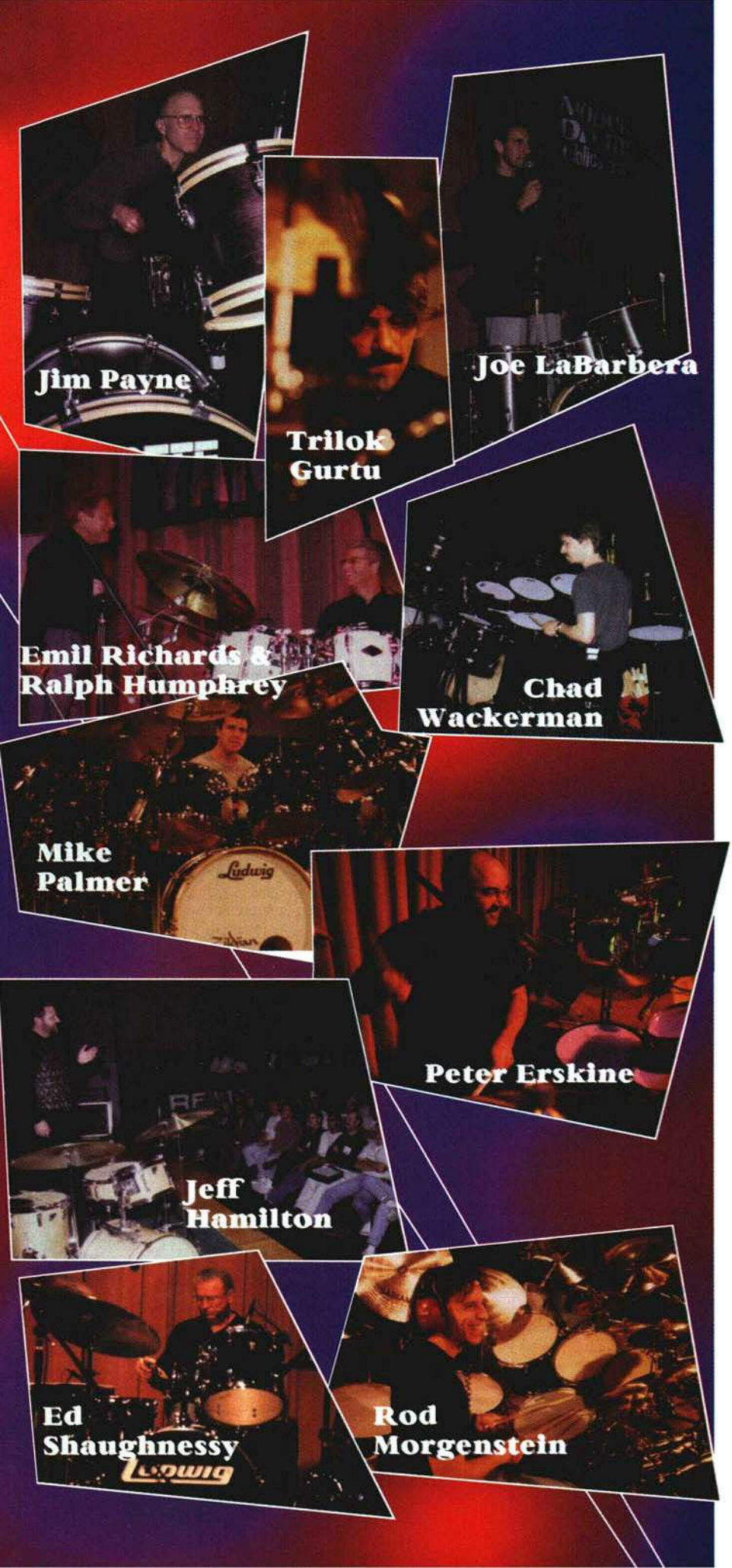
Garth Brooks' drummer, **Mike Palmer,** talked about working with the multi-platinum country artist. According to Mike, "Onstage with Garth it's a bar-room brawl, and I'm right in the middle of it!" Mike displayed his "big," arm-swinging style, which results in his getting a huge sound on the drums. He demonstrated this by playing along to a few Garth tracks.

The beautifully tasteful playing style of jazz veteran **Joe LaBarbera** was a high point of PASIC. Joe's master class, which covered time playing and soloing, was truly an educational event. The main inspiration derived from his clinic was that the drums can be played softly *and* with intensity.

Peter Erskine's clinic had the master drummer performing on three different drumsets, making the point that we should be flexible and perform by using our ears, not by playing a list of set licks. Peter got down to some serious playing at his after-hours gig at a nearby club, where, after a duet with conguero **Giovanni Hidalgo,** Peter remarked, "That was like playing handball with God!"

Former Dregs/Winger drummer **Rod Morgenstein** showed why he is one of the top progressive drummers playing today. Rod's clinic featured a performance with keyboardist Jordan Rudess, and he also took a few moments to explain some different concepts, including how he developed his metric modulation chops.

Former Zappa sideman and current LAMA director **Ralph Humphrey** put



together an impressive quartet (with master percussionist **Emil Richards** on marimba) to perform and discuss odd meters. Ralph played great and was even more impressive at helping students understand the concept.

A huge turnout welcomed **Trilok Gurtu,** who rewarded the large crowd with a performance that featured the percussionist on a wide range of instruments. His mixing of many rhythmic styles, from Indian tabla techniques to fusion drumset, was stunning.

Jeff Hamilton followed Trilok, saying, "You've been to India, now let's go to Indiana." Jeff's easy and fun rapport with the audience made for an enjoyable hour, which was partially spent focusing on the importance of being relaxed at the kit. Other topics discussed by Jeff included ways of playing with intensity ("internal groaning!"), stage awareness ("be open to the musicians around you"), and brush technique ("always keep one brush on the head at all times").

The ever-evolving **Dave Weckl** debuted his current approach to playing the drums at his well-attended clinic. With a new setup to accommodate his intentionally efficient playing style, Dave gave a very informative clinic on a whole host of topics. His looser approach was evident, especially as he made his way through some romping New Orleans grooves.

Speaking of New Orleans, the soulful **Bernard Purdie** took his clinic audience on what he called "A musical journey, from New Orleans to up North." Purdie put everything he played in the pocket and eventually performed his masterpiece, the Purdie shuffle.

The final clinic at PASIC was given by **Simon Phillips,** who was in the best form of his career. Playing to tracks from his new solo CD, *Another Lifetime,* Simon startled the packed house with his dynamic and grooving drumming. The extended drum solo he played, which featured several memorable licks including his favorite triplets-between-the-two-kicks-and-hands, brought the audience to its feet.

Other standout clinics were given by Steve Houghton, Bobby Rock, Clayton Cameron, Terri Lyne Carrington, and Chad Wackerman. The next PASIC will be held November 4-7 in Orlando, Florida. (Does Disney own PAS, too?) For information call PAS at (405) 353-1455.

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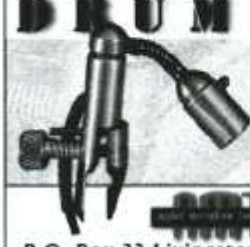
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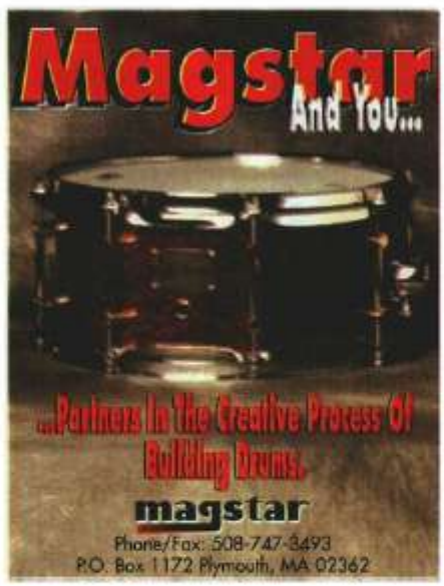

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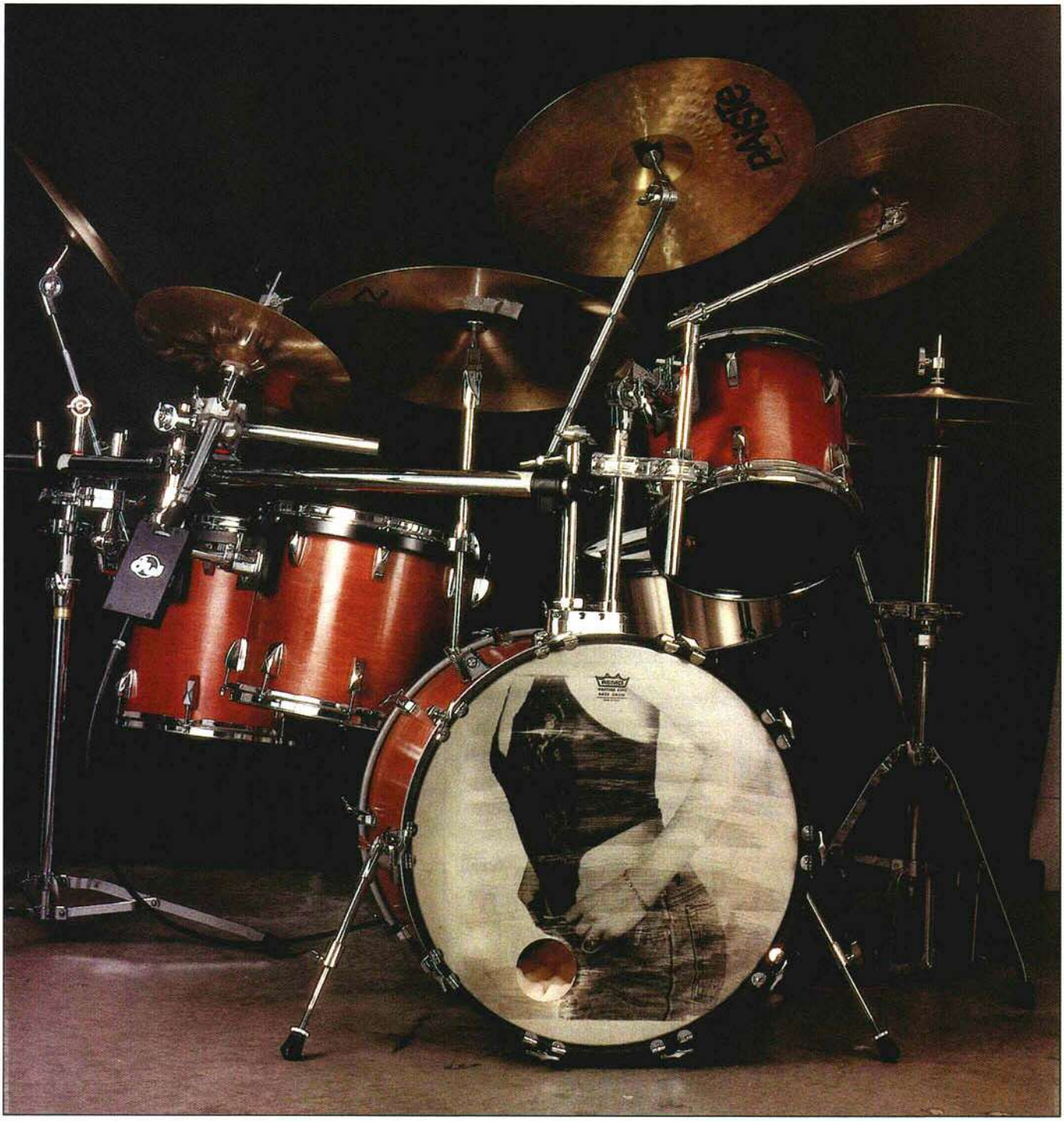

Andy Zunski's kit was a labor of love and imagination. Completely "home-made" over the course of a year, it incorporates Keller shells from Precision Drum Co., hardware from Stewart MacDonald's supply, DW pedals, Pearl and Gibraltar stands, and miscellaneous hardware "from just about every drumshop in the eastern US." The drumshells are finished with cherry wood stain and clear polyurethane.

Andy designed the kit to integrate the tom mount and most of the cymbal boom arms into the bass drum bracket. "It frees up a lot of space and makes for less hardware to lug around," he says.

The picture on the front bass drum head was created by Andy's wife, Mary Ellen. As Andy explains, "A photographic image was developed directly onto the drum head by brushing a liquid emulsion (like liquid developing paper) onto the drumhead and then exposing it to the image."

Andy uses the kit for gigs throughout northeastern Pennsylvania and upstate New York. Says Andy, "It has garnered many compliments for its great sound and 'one-of-a-kind' appearance."

PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit. Send photo(s) to: Drumkit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.

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ADVERTISER INDEX

ADVERTISER	PAGE NUMBER
Agner Swiss Drumsticks	77
Applied Microphone Technology (AMT)	147
Atlanta Drums & Percussion	122
Atlanta Pro Percussion	134
Audiophile Imports	136
Ayotte Drums	87
Bosphorus Cymbals	27
Brady Drums	122
Camber Cymbal Co.	62
Cannon Percussion	86,88,90
Caribbean Rhythms	148
Clear-Sonic Mfg.	136
Concept One Percussion	112
Concord Jazz	92
DCI/Note Service/Warner Bros.	94
Dixon	115
Drum Center of Lexington	148
The Drum Pad	147
DrumTech	70
Drum Workshop	46/47,99
Drum World	22
Drummers Collective	56
Drums In The Wind	149
Drums On Sale	122
Evans Products	1
Fibes	55
Vic Firth, Inc.	57,75
Fork's Drum Closet	147
Gemini Percussion Systems, Inc.	37
Gibraltar	73
Gretsch	25
Grover Pro Percussion	72
HQ Percussion Products	113,122
Humes & Berg	59,61
Husher International, Ltd.	122
Interstate Musician Supply	27
Joe Morello	148
KOSA	54
L&M Music	57
L.T. Lug Lock, Inc.	88
Long Island Drum Center	101
Los Angeles Music Academy (LAMA)	91
Ludwig	Inside Front Cover
Magstar Drums	148
Mainline	63
Mapex	17,141
MD Back Issues	89,133
MD Cross-Sticking Studies	117
MD Drum Instructors Only	137
MD Festival Weekend	151
MD Festival Videos	96/97
MD Library	102/103
MD Subsriptions	125
Meinl Cymbals/Percussion	7,8
Milwaukee Drums	112
Midwest Percussion	108
Music Tech	148
Musician's Friend	105
Musician's Pharmacy	122
Musicians Institute	100
Noble & Cooley	20
Paiste	79,111
Pearl Corporation	28/29,Inside Back Cover
Peavey Drums	107
Percussive Arts Society	139
Precision Drum Co.	122
Premier	4/5,58
Pro•Mark	24/25,124
Regal Tip	71
Remo	31,45,135
Roc-N-Soc	91
Sabian	21,23
Savior Inc.	106,138.
Sennheiser	74
Shrapnel Records	55
Skidmore College	124
Slingerland	93,95
Slug Percussion Products	136
Super Gloss/Sam Barnard	148
Sunlite Industrial Corp.	76
Tama	26,64/65,78
Taos Drums	136
Thoroughbred Music	123
Toca	77,119
Tribes Drums	136
Trick	147
UE Systems	149
Vater Percussion	109,147
Visu-Lite/EPS	147
Waddell's Drum Center	136
West LA. Music	72
Williams Percussion	136
XL Specialty	22
Yamaha	60
Zildjian	9,10,1 l,13,Outside Back Cover

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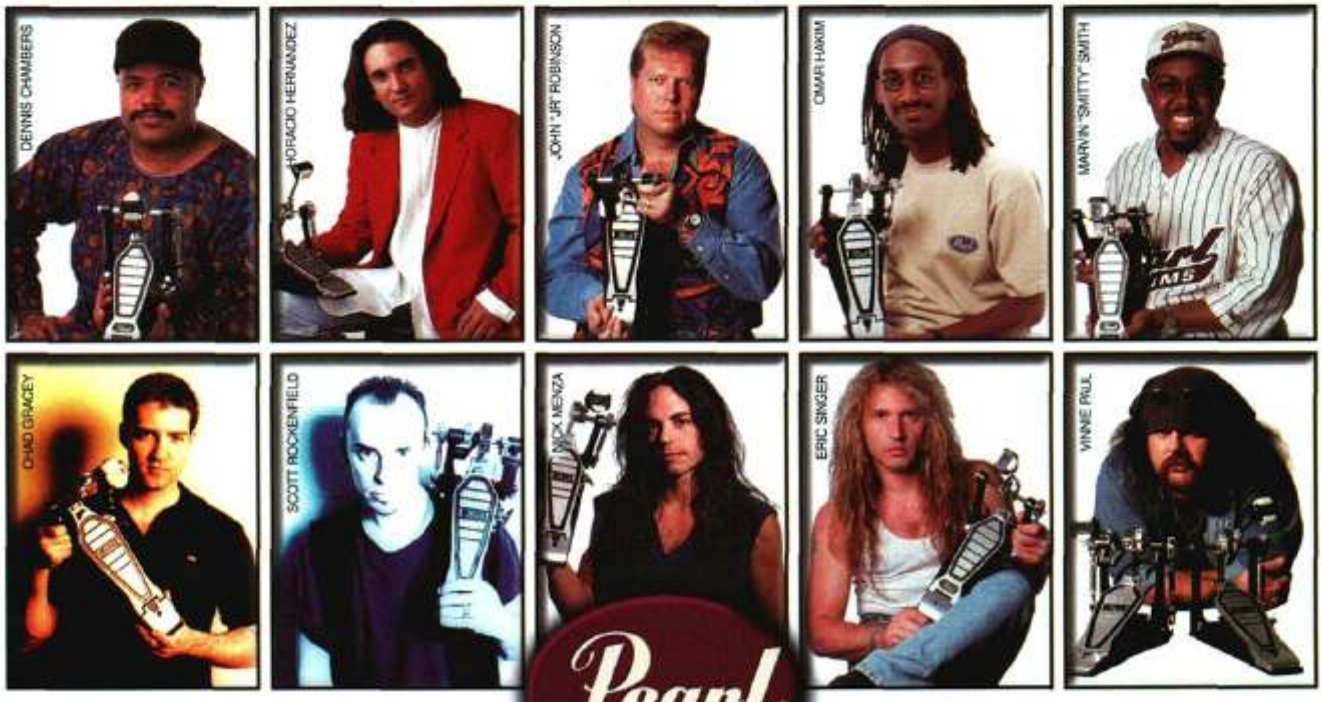

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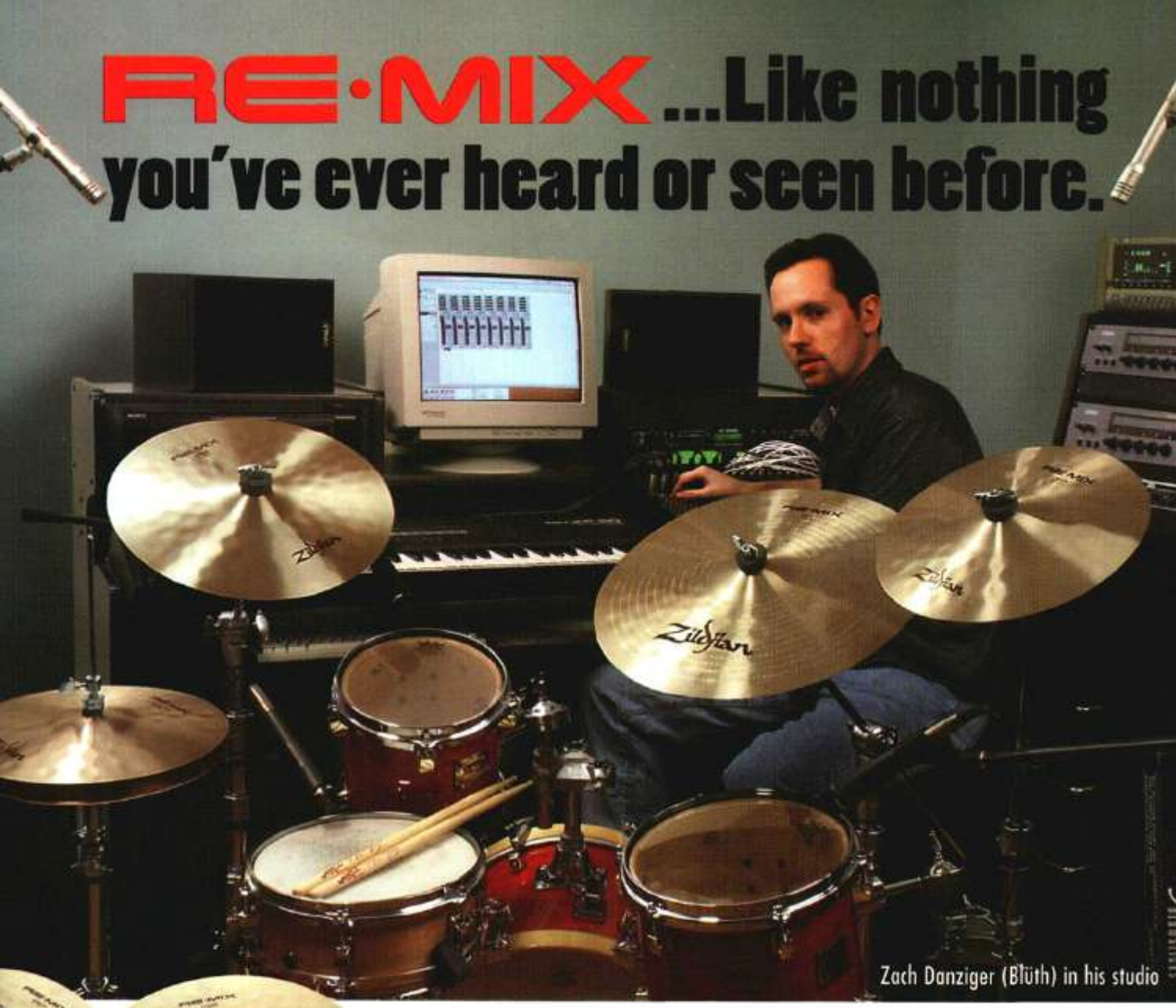

Zach Danziger (Blüth) in his studio

Techno, Jungle, House, Drum 'n' Bass, Trip-Hop...there might be a hundred different styles of the electronic music that's having such an impact on the popular music we listen to today. One constant that defines them all is their electronically created and modified rhythms. And increasingly today, drummers are being called upon to recreate these electronically generated rhythms.

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